

*An Account of*  
RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT  
*in the*  
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COALFIELD

JOHN A. BIRKS  
AND  
PETER COXON

## **Introduction to this republished edition**

This is a reprint of John A. Birks and Peter Coxon's book which was published privately in 1949. You can find references to it in all the bibliographies of railways in Nottinghamshire and this gives some idea of its importance and its quality. But up to now it has been a difficult book to track down.

I know very little about these two authors. The only other article I have managed to track down was published in the Railway Magazine on the topic of the Mansfield & Pinxton railway. My guess is that only a few copies of the book were ever printed and this is a shame for it certainly deserves to be better known and read. What struck me when reading it was the high quality of their observations and the detail of the two writers present us with.

I first came across it whilst researching the Great Northern Leen Valley Extension which goes through Kirkby, Sutton, Skegby, Pleasley and Shirebrook with a branch line to Silverhill and Teversal collieries. Whilst this particular line is a small part of their book, I found myself engrossed in the story they tell of the coalfield railways in Nottinghamshire. They stick well to the theme and never lose the idea of a story of railway development centred in their chosen area.

I found it very good on the very early days of railways: not only the dry detail of the chronology of railway development etc. but also the fascinating detail of how the railways were received. These two authors have an eye to the interesting and relevant detail. Their coverage of the Mansfield & Pinxton railway is excellent as far as I can see and I learnt a lot about this most historic railway both in terms of Nottinghamshire and the nation.

In presenting the book I have mostly tried to remain faithful to the original. It was produced in the day of the typewriter which used Courier font and I have stuck with this. The original book was quite simple in style – the pages were simply their typed up work – this is not intended to take anything away from them. I have altered very little – the page numbering is slightly different to the original. Importantly, the text on each page is exactly the same as the original which can lead to some confusing page endings where a sentence seems to end suddenly. In such cases just turn the page and you will find it continuing. I simply wanted each page to have the exact content of the original.

If you have an interest in the development of railways this book is bound to interest you – as it did me.

Enjoy

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P.S. I am busy at work producing a number of books and guides on railways local to north Nottinghamshire and the adjoining parts of Derbyshire and all of them will be available for free on the Internet Archive site. If you don't already have it, there is a history and walk around the Teversal, Pleasley and Skegby railways. Just search for one of these places and hey presto!

## Preface

Our purpose in wiring this book has been to give an account of railway development in the Nottinghamshire coalfields and to trace the effects of the prevailing economic and social circumstances of the district, as reflected in the railway politics of the time.

In a work of this sort one is naturally indebted to the authors of the standard railway histories, and also of course to the local historians; a list of all sources of reference will be found at the end of the text.

To all those who have so kindly helped by obtaining and checking information and giving advice, we are much obliged; and whilst it is impossible to acknowledge the many acts of courtesy we have received, we should particularly like to thank the former Midland & Scottish Railway, London & North Eastern Railway, and the Local Newspapers, for their co-operation; and the Railway Magazine for the loan of blocks.

Also, to those who have been responsible for the production of this book, we are much indebted.

It is our hope that his short work will be of interest not only to the local historian, but also to the student of railway history.

## ERRATA

Page 31, line 6.

The line which was continued to High Park and Beauvale Collieries was, of course, built by Herbert Walker Colliery Co. and not as implied in the text by the Midland Railway.

The Map (Back Cover)

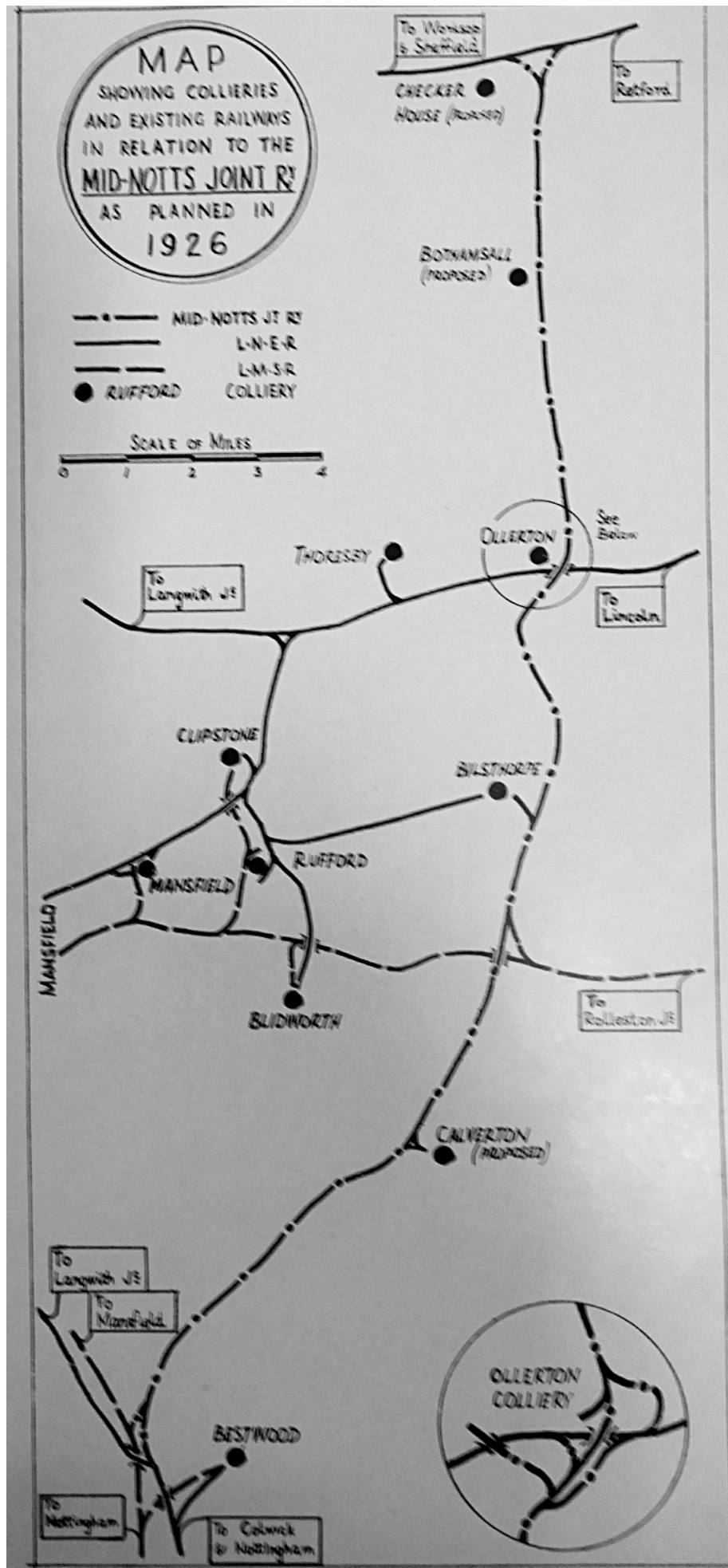
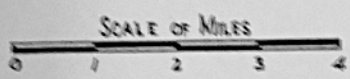
"Bilstorpe" - between Ollerton and Farnsfield, should read Bilsthorpe.

Mansfield.  
July, 1949

J.A.B  
P.C.

# MAP SHOWING COLLIERIES AND EXISTING RAILWAYS IN RELATION TO THE MID-NOTTS JOINT R<sup>y</sup> AS PLANNED IN 1926

- MID-NOTTS JT R<sup>y</sup>
- L.N.E.R.
- L.M.S.R.
- RUFFORD COLLIERY



CHAPTER I.

Coal in Nottinghamshire:  
Early tramway developments:  
Mansfield & Pinxton Railway,

The problem of transporting heavy minerals in bulk was not one which confronted the industrialists of the early 19th century alone, for the coal masters of some centuries earlier had similar problems to solve.

In Nottinghamshire, coal was being mined as early as the 13th century at Wollaton and Strelley and we can learn from Dr. A.C. Wood's "History of Nottinghamshire" that by the late 16th century:

"There was a substantial expansion of mining along the western fringe of the county, from Newstead and Kimberley to Strelley, Bilborough and Wollaton in the 16th century, and Wollaton Hall, which Sir Francis Willoughby built between 1580-8 out of the proceeds of his coal, is an abiding monument to the wealth which this produced. It has been estimated that in 1600 the total output of these Nottinghamshire pits was about 30-50,000 tons per annum, of which about 20,000 was raised at Wollaton alone. The Morrison family, who had acquired lands belonging to Beauvale Priory from Sir William Hussey, to whom they had been first granted, had coal pits and iron mills at Selston. The Byrons were interested in these iron mills, and it is reasonable to conjecture that coal also was being mined on their estates, in the Newstead-Papplewick area".

The difficulties of transporting this coal to the Trent, most of which was then conveyed by barge to the lower river valley, was made acute, especially in bad weather. The state of the roads at the time was poor, and light railways were often used. What is recognised as being the first railway to be used in this country was built from pits at Wollaton to the Trent side, a distance of about four miles. Reference to this appears in a letter (1) written by a midland coal dealer, found in some documents at Wollaton Hall; "I beseeche you take order with Sir Thomas that we mai have libertie to bring coales down the railes by wagen, for our cariadges onely, and we will bring them down by raile ourselves, for Strelley cartway is so fowle as few cariadges can passe".

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(1) Dated May 1, 1610.

From the 17th Century the coalfield developed fairly steadily, especially in the northern area around Cossall and Selston where mining had commenced about 400 years earlier. In the lower reaches of the Erewash iron smelting furnaces developed and in Chapman's "Survey of Nottinghamshire" in 1775 14 pits are shown to have existed in the area. During the next 25 years the construction of canals as a means of the easier transport of goods took place throughout England, and in this area the Cromford Canal, connecting with the Erewash Canal, gave an outlet to the Trent for the coal being produced in ever larger quantities. It was obvious that the canal would not pass by every pit in the district, and the problem of better transport than the roadways of the time provided, still remained. The crude early railways were still in use, but much improvement was effected by replacing the wooden rails with iron bars which gave longer life. An interesting description of a wagonway of the time is given in an article in the "Repertory of Arts and Manufacturers" for 1800:

"...at Brinsley in Nottinghamshire, one horse drew, on a (rail) road where the declivity was  $\frac{1}{3}$  of an inch at a yard (1 in 108), 21 waggons, of 5 cwt. each, which with their loading of coals, amounted to 43 tons 8 cwt.; the same horse drew seven tons up the road (cartway). It must be observed, that in both the foregoing statements, the cwt. is 120 lb. On this road the rails are three feet long, 33 lb weight, and calculated to carry two tons on each waggon, laid four feet two inches wide, on stone or wood sleepers, placed on a bed of sleck, so as to fix it solid and firm. The expence of compleating one mile of such a road, where materials of all descriptions lie convenient, and where at the land lies tolerably favourable for the descent, will be about 900 l. or 1000 l. per mile, single road, fenced, etc. exclusive of bridges, culverts, or any extra expence in deep cutting or high embankments. Rails are made from 20 to 40 lb per yard, agreeable to the weight they have to bear".

After the construction of the Cromford Canal, the majority of pits in the area constructed railways similar to the above, the one at Pinxton lower pit continued to use wooden rails until the year 1808.

We now deal in detail with the longest tramroad built to the canal - the Mansfield to Pinxton. Although the promotion of this tramroad was due mainly to the coal owners of the upper reaches of the Erewash Valley, the Inhabitants of Mansfield were also very interested in the project; this, together with the length of the proposed line, resulted in it being built under a separate Act of Parliament.

By the construction of this tramroad, the stone and lime for which Mansfield was noted, was conveyed, together with the products of the Erewash Valley - coal and lead - to the Cromford Canal at Pinxton, and thence by the rivers Trent and Soar, to Leicester and the south. Thus the local produce now found a market outside Nottinghamshire, and the new tramway, the sixteenth to be constructed in this country and incorporated by Act of Parliament, prospered, for in those days the conditions of the roads made haulage of heavy goods by horse and cart impossible for long distances. These, therefore, were the incentives of the Erewash coal promoters, namely, wider markets - Mansfield and the area surrounding it in the North, and Leicester in the south. It would be wrong to assume, however, that the chief responsibility for promoting the company lay entirely with the Erewash coal owners. Mr. Jessop, who owned a coal pit at Kirkby (the Summit pit, as it is still called locally), realised that such a line would give him a direct access to the Cromford canal, and enable him to send his coals to the south, and he therefore strongly supported it. This Mr. Jessop was a son of the more famous engineer William Jessop (1745 - 1814), who was responsible for quite a few tram roads( 2) and also a joint founder, with Benjamin Outram, of the Butterley company, founded in 1790s. He followed in his father's footsteps, being an "Ironmaster of Butterley Hall, co. Derby".

The Cromford Canal was built by the engineers Jessop and Outram, and it was intended to extend it to Mansfield but the expense of the numerous locks due to the contour of the ground, and the possibility of water shortage in times of drought, caused the scheme to be dropped. At about the same time, there had been much wrangling as to the best method of connecting Mansfield to Gainsborough, and various canal projects to effect this had occupied a good deal of public attention. These had been put aside in favour of the tramroad for not only would this connect the town with the south by means of the Cromford Canal, but, by that canal's access to the Trent, give a through means of transport to Gainsborough which was at that time a port of some standing, and the principal head of navigation on the river Trent.

It was in 1811 that Parliamentary powers were first sought for the construction of the tramway, but the project was held up for a considerable time owing to the promoters' indecision as to which of two types of rail to use - the "Jessop Edge Rail" or the "Outram Way". At that time there was much controversy throughout the country as to the various advantages of the two entirely different types of rail, the edge rail and the plate way. The latter had a flange upon the side of the rail, usually the inner, to keep the wheels on the track and had the advantage that any road vehicle with the correct width between wheels could run on it. The edge rail gradually evolved about the end of the 18th century, and

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(2) These Included the famous Surrey Iron Railway and Ticknall tramroad.

here the flange was upon the inside of the wheels. Mr. Jessop favoured its use with wooden sleepers and first used it the Loughborough and Nanpantan railway in 1789. Mr. Outram used the plate way supported on stone blocks for his tramways and the two kinds of track were often referred to as the "railways" and "Outram ways". It should be stated here that the derivation of the word tramway is in no way connected with the name of Outram. The earliest meaning of the word tram seems to have been the handle of a cart or barrow, a beam of wood, and it was not connected with "ways" until the late 18th century.

Mr. C.E. Stretton (3) writing on the Mansfield and Pinxton's dispute over the best type of rail states "the Outram way carried the day". Now in December 1939, during excavation work at Pinxton wharf, some rails were unearthed, and on examination were found to be cast iron edge rails with the inscription "Mansfield & Pinxton Railway co." It is due to Mr. Fred Smith of Pinxton that these rails were preserved as they had been placed aside as scrap iron. It would seem, therefore, that the line as laid in 1819 did not remain in its original condition during the Company's separate existence, though the expense of replacing nearly eight miles of plate way, with edge rail, would have been hardly justifiable. The authors' view on the basis of there being no evidence to support Mr. Stretton, is that the edge rails were laid down in 1819 and remained in use until the rebuilding by the Midland Railway. If Stretton's statement is as inaccurate as his description of the Belvoir Castle line (4) then it may be entirely disregarded.

Mr. Jessop senior used a cast iron edge rail on his Nanpantan railway in 1789, and a similar though slightly heavier rail on the Belvoir Castle railway in 1815. This latter rail is very alike the Pinxton rail and was spiked to wooden plugs in stone blocks to a gauge of 4' 4½". The Pinxton line was laid in the same manner though the gauge is unknown and the rails were all cast at the Butterley Company's works. The stone for the sleepers, as well as for the Kings Mill bridge, was quarried at Whatstandwell, Derbyshire. This would seem to show that the building of the line commenced from the Pinxton end and the stone would be conveyed by the direct and easy way from Whatstandwell, namely the Cromford Canal.

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(3) History of the Midland Railway

(4) In his "History of the Midland Railway" Mr. Stretton gives a description of this railway which Mr. C.E. Lee found to be completely untrue (see "History of British Railways Down to the year 1830." (Dendy Marshal)).



So although it was in 1811 that the plans for a railway from Mansfield to Pinxton were prepared, owing to the controversy over the rail, six years elapsed before they were put into operation. Extract from the notices in the "Nottingham Journal", June 28th, 1817, reads:-

"           Mansfield and Pinxton Railway.

Notice is hereby given that the first general assembly of the Company of Proprietors for carrying into Execution, an Act in the present session for making and maintaining a Railway from the Town of Mansfield, to connect with the Cromford Canal at Pinxton Basin, will be held at the Swan Inn, in Mansfield, on Monday the 30th instant at the Hour of eleven in the forenoon.

By Order

George Walkden. (5)

Mansfield 19th June, 1817.       "

Dated 16th June 1817, the Act was for the formation of "The Mansfield and Pinxton Railway Company" for the "making and maintaining of a Tram Road from Bulls Head Lane in the Parish of Mansfield in the County of Nottingham to connect with the Cromford Canal at Pinxton Basin in the Parish of Pinxton in the County of Derby". £22,800 was the authorised sum to be raised. Work on the line was begun immediately and from time to time reports were published telling of the progress of work. On 9th April, 1819, the "Nottingham Review" published the following:

"The new railway from Mansfield to Pinxton being completed, will be opened for general business on Easter Tuesday for which great preparations are making, and the Railway company with the gentlemen of the town will dine at the Swan Inn; dinners also will be provided for great numbers of workmen at different Public Houses in the town".

It appears that the general public took a great Interest in the new line, and on the opening day, which had been eagerly looked forward to, many people from villages 7 or 8 miles out, came Into the town to see the procession, for "..... a more exhilarating scene was probably never exhibited in the Town of Mansfield". In order to work up the general enthusiasm,

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(5) George Walkden was the clerk to the M. & P.R. Co. during the whole of its existence

the bells were rung early in the morning, and, to keep it up continued ringing throughout the day. At 9 o'clock in the morning of Tuesday 13th April, 1819, the first load of coals was brought into the company's wharf amidst the cheers of the people who had gone there to witness the proceedings. The coal was unloaded and taken to the market place where it was heaped up and set on fire, and continued burning throughout the night. The "Nottingham Journal" for April 17th gives a very good description of the remainder of the proceedings:

"About 9 o'clock the proprietors and friends of the undertaking, began to assemble at the Swan Inn, and about 2 o'clock they proceeded on horse-back, attended by hundreds of foot people, along the Alfretton Road, about a mile and a half, to where it comes in contact with the Railway, at the beautiful five arch bridge, constructed under the direction of Mr. Jessop, the engineer, where they met ten waggons, laden with coal, from the Pinxton Colliery, surmounted by workmen and colliers, carrying branches of laurel. There the assemblage amounted to some thousands, covering not only the road but in a great measure the fields by the road side. The procession then moved towards the town - Mr. Mason having presented the proprietors with a flag for the procession, bearing the motto 'By Perseverance we Have Obtained', this was carried in front, and the Friendly Societies having also attended with their flags and a good band of music, from Sutton-in-Ashfield, long provided for the occasion, the whole had a most enlivening appearance, to which the Joy and satisfaction pictured on the countenances of the people, contributed very considerably. Having arrived at the market place about 3 o'clock which, notwithstanding the heavy rain falling at the time, was thronged with people, the band struck up 'God Save the King' which was followed by loud huzzas from the whole population assembled who thus testified their satisfaction at the accomplishment of this arduous undertaking. Nearly three hundred of the workmen who had been employed during the last three months on the road, then returned to partake of a dinner, provided for them by the proprietors, at different public houses in the town; and the proprietors themselves with their friends at 4 o'clock partook of a most excellent dinner, furnished by Mr. Stirrup at the Swan Inn, for the occasion, Col. Need being President, and Mr. Jas Heygate, Vice-President, where they spent the remainder of the day with the greatest conviviality, and that satisfaction which must always attend the accomplishment of any undertaking for the Public good. The following were some of the toasts drank on the occasion.

The King.

The Prince Regent. (contd)

Success to the Railway.

The Duke of Portland, the patron of the Railway.-  
John Coke, Esq. with thanks for his zealous service  
during its progress.

Mr. Jas. Heygate, with like thanks.

The absent subscribers and friends to the Railway,  
Col. Need, with thanks for his uniform Support and  
Exertions during the whole Undertaking.

The Members of the County.

The Duke of Wellington.

Thomas Walker Esq.

Lord Exmouth,

The High Sheriff.

Mr. Mason., with Thanks for the Colours presented to  
the Subscribers this day.

Lord Titchfield.

Henry Walker, Esq.

The Treasurer of the Company. (6)

The Ladies.

The Army and Navy. "

The festivities did not end on that day. The  
following evening an assembly was held in the large room at  
the Moot Hall, which had been "Previously decorated for the  
occasion". This function was well attended and was said to  
have been the largest assembly seen for years.

King's Mill bridge, also designed by Mr. Jessop, was  
called the Portland bridge and continued to be one of the  
sights of the neighbourhood for years afterwards.

The line started from the Cromford Canal at Pinxton  
Wharf, and by winding round the bases of the numerous hills it  
progressed by a devious route uphill to Kirkby, in easy access  
of all the collieries on the way. To Mansfield the line ran  
fairly straight downhill from Kirkby summit: the present  
Mansfield - Nottingham line now runs over the same route  
except for a few small deviations, set forth in more detail in  
a later chapter.

The Mansfield terminus went under the name of  
Portland Wharf and was situated alongside White Bear Lane,  
from which access was obtained. The wharf, which was  
surrounded (and still is) by a high stone wall, contained a  
store yard, warehouses, and stables for the horses that worked  
the line, and alongside the wall dividing it from White Bear  
Lane, were the offices of Messrs. Coke and Jessop.

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(6) Messrs. Abney & Maltby, Bankers in Mansfield

From the main line of the Mansfield and Pinxton, various branches were built, and one to some pits at Selston joined with a line built from the Codnor Park Puddling furnaces of the Butterley Company, providing through railway access from Mansfield to Codnor Park, which lies  $2\frac{1}{4}$  miles south of Pinxton on the Cromford Canal, There was also a rope-worked incline built up to Kirkby Woodhouse, the course of which is still plainly visible today.

Bullocks, and at a later date horses, were used for pulling the wagons, but between Kirkby summit and Pinxton wagons descended by their own weight, men walking alongside to check the speed by spragging the wheels. The winding nature of the track on the southern section of the line considerably facilitated the haulage of wagons; in the descent from Kirkby, the flanges of the wheels pressing against the rails on the curves of the track, tended to slow up the wagons and act as a natural brake, whilst in the ascent from Pinxton the winding nature of the line made it easier going for the horses.

The wagons used were, by necessity, strongly constructed due to the fact that two of the principal commodities which the wagons conveyed were coal and stone. They were of the chaldron pattern and constructed mainly of iron, as were the wheels and strappings, their capacity was approximately  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tons of coal. It will be remembered that when the line was first contemplated stone and lime were the main commodities to be conveyed from Mansfield. However, since then, the coalfield had developed considerably, gradually spreading up the Erewash valley towards the town, and coal had superseded lime as the mineral which provided most of the railway's traffic; in addition to this, Mansfield was becoming renowned for its good quality moulding sand, for which it is well known even today. In 1821, the first coals to be sent to Mansfield Gas Works, then just opened, travelled over the railway from Old Isaiah's (7) pit near Pinxton. This pit had just been built and erected by the Butterley Company and during its third year of opening, raised 54,342 tons of coal. It was worked for about 40 years.

By 1833, the railway seems to have become a favourite place for foot races and walking matches. This should not be taken as inferring that the prosperity and efficiency of the railway was declining. On the contrary, the figures for the M. & P. railway for the year ending Lady Day, 1834 show that for tonnage and rent of wharves £1,966.3.9 and for expenses in repairs and salaries, £485.13.2. were spent.

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(7) Isaiah Rigley was the manager of this pit for many years.

The principal tonnages were:

Coal and coke.	50,000 tons
Sand	2,161 tons
Stone & brick	1,396 tons
Lime	687 tons
Timber & Slate	258 tons
Metals (principally	
Iron)	170 tons
Manure	565 tons
Corn & malt	383 tons
General Merchandise	1.435 tons

The dividend was £4.10.0. per share, and the shares £50 each, £1,200 was paid off for the land.

It was in October of this year that the Houses of Parliament in London were destroyed by fire, A Parliamentary committee was set up to decide the material with which to rebuild the Houses, and following a visit to Southwell Minster, it was decided to use local stone. This brought considerable prosperity to the Railway as a large quantity of the stone was transported over its rails to Pinxton, and thence to London.

Despite the heavy traffic and consequent prosperity which the Pinxton Railway should have brought to Mansfield, the railway was disliked by many. The opposition came from the usual quarters; namely the stage coach owners and waggoners and we read that before the construction of the tramroad, large studs of horses were kept in the town for use in the coaches and carts. This opposition seems to have culminated in a letter to the "Nottingham Journal" for 12th January, 1830, signed by one J, Dowlas of Mansfield, who states that scarcely anyone in the town "will bear testimony to advantages conferred by the railway," He protests against the craze of railway promotion, and as proof, invites anyone who wants to witness a demonstration of their futility to come to Mansfield and see the distress which the railway has brought to the once prosperous town. He argues that a turnpike road would have been more profitable as anybody could have used his horse and cart, but at the moment they are prohibited and trade is at a monopoly. He continues, that owing to the railway, 200 houses are empty and the town is getting poorer. In view of this, who would favour railways, for "their real utility is very problematical", and where there are good turnpike roads, navigable rivers and canals, they are totally unnecessary, "No-one who has rusticated would permit a railway near his grounds as it is not only the track but the appendages that deface the scenery," The appendages consisted of lime kilns, coal pit hills and Jangle of wagons plus the low morals of those engaged on the tramroad. He thinks "this state of affairs will be the same throughout the country" and then contrasts

rail and water carriage:

1 ton stone Mansfield - Pinxton (7¾ miles)	3/10 by rail
1 ton stone 46 miles	12/- by canal

This letter brings out several interesting sidelights. His statement that "trade is at a monopoly" indicates that the tramroad was one on which members of the public were not encouraged to run their own wagons and that trade was limited to one set of carters. His contrast between the rate of carrying 1 ton stone by the M. & P. and by canal is not altogether a fair comparison; a truer one would be between railway and road rates. As a person under the pseudonym of 'Sherwood' in the issue of the "Nottingham Journal" dated 15th May, 1830 states; "There were, despite the inconveniences of the tramroad, considerable advantages". For instance, before the foundation of the railway, coal in Mansfield was 10/- to 13/- per ton but in 1832 was seldom higher than 8/- to 8/6d.

Some time before this, Mr. John Coke, High Sheriff of the county, and William Jessop, directed a level to be taken for the purpose of building a railway from Mansfield to Ollerton and announced their intention in the "Nottingham Review" on 18th June 1830. Mr. Buxton (8) writes; "On 10th September 1830, a committee meeting of the Mansfield and Pinxton Railway proprietors was held at Mansfield to consider the propriety to form a railway from that town to Ollerton, and those present were of the opinion that it would be desirable, and it was resolved that application be made to the Duke of Portland, Earl Manvers, and the Hon. Rev. John Lumley Savile for their consent. What occurred to prevent the scheme does not transpire, but by the middle of November 1830, the Mansfield - Ollerton branch was put on one side for the time." The exact route of the intended branch was not mentioned, but it seems difficult to imagine that it was a continuation of the M. & P. due to the difficult nature of the country and the deep valley which would have to be crossed in order to take the line over the town.

About the 1830's, a passenger carriage owned by William Epperstone, proprietor of the Boat Inn at Pinxton wharf, made a journey to Mansfield on Thursday mornings (this being market day). It was advertised to return as follows: "William Epperstone's coach will start from Mansfield every Thursday at three in the afternoon and run to the Boat Inn, Pinxton wharf," it was for second and third class passengers.

The main carrier to use the tramway at this time seems

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(8) A noted local historian who died in 1936

to have been Wheatcroft and Company who announced that "Two or three wagons every morning at six or seven o'clock on the Railway to Pinxton, whence goods are forwarded to all parts of the kingdom by land and water". James Pickering was the agent at their railway wagon warehouse on Portland wharf. In White's directory of Nottinghamshire, published in 1844 Epperstone's coach is not mentioned, though Wheatcroft and Company were still the main carriers. From here we read that, after 25 years the "Pinxton line is a great advantage to the inhabitants of the central part of the county... one horse will draw upon it as much as would require five horses upon a common road".

About 1833 there was considerable talk of a steam railway coming to Mansfield. This was not merely an idle rumour, although the scheme did not materialise until 15 years later. In the years 1833 and 4, an engineer by the name of Mr. W.D. Holmes had published maps and details for the construction of various railways in this district. His schemes were again revised in May 1837, and in order to get a correct impression of their aim, we can do no better than quote from the revised prospectus issued at that time:

"Prospectus of the Midland Grand Junction Railway, connecting the towns of Sheffield, . Chesterfield, Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Nottingham by a direct line of railway from and to each other and all the Metropolis, Eastern Counties and Eastern Ports. Capital £1,500,000 in shares of £50. each. Deposit £1 per share."

The lines here proposed are of the greatest importance as regards the agricultural, manufactures and commerce of the Midland and Eastern Counties and the produce of the Midland Iron and coalfield. Sheffield, despite its importance, possesses no conveyance to London except by a devious and uncertain carriage by sea, or the less efficient and (as regards expense) impracticable carriage by wagon. Between Sheffield, Chesterfield, Mansfield, and Nottingham is only a turnpike road communication and that by no means direct or level. The intended Midland Counties North Midland and Sheffield and Rotherham railways by Loughborough, Derby, Belper, Chesterfield and Rotherham will form connecting lines from London etc. to Sheffield and Nottingham, but of so circuitous a route as to be altogether inadequate to the commercial importance of those places, or that of the chain of manufacturing towns between them, either as regards their communication with each other, or those north of Nottingham with the metropolis. The object of this Company is to carry into effect parts of two plans projected by Mr. W.D. Holmes, Civil Engineer; maps and prospectus of which were first published in 1832 and 1833. These parts are:-

"1st to form a direct line of railway communication from South to West through the manufacturing and mineral districts of the Midland Counties and South Yorkshire, by uniting with the M.C.R. at Nottingham, the Mansfield Pinxton railway (which it is proposed to amend, purchase and extend) near Sutton-in-Ashfield and Mansfield, the more direct part of the N.M.R. near Staveley and Chesterfield, and the Manchester and Sheffield railways at the town of Sheffield.

2nd to unite this line with the "Northern and Eastern" (London, Cambridge and York) railway to London, by an extension from Sutton-in-Ashfield and the Pinxton and Mansfield Railway in a South East direction to the Northern and Eastern railway in the county of Lincoln, and from there to Boston. By the Northern and Eastern Railway it communicates in direct line, not only with London, but with other railways in its progress, to Lynn, Norwich, Yarmouth, Ipswich. Colchester. Harwich and all parts of the Eastern Counties and Eastern coast."

The prospectus then goes on to deal with more proposed extensions -

"in a northerly direction to the Halifax and Bradford district and on to Carlisle and Scotland; and the southeast line terminating in a junction at Sutton-in-Ashfield to Stockport and Manchester; the several apparently formidable natural obstacles to a railway on that line being effectually overcome by the plan contemplated. This plan will continue the direct line from London to Nottingham, near Mansfield, Sutton and Chesterfield to Sheffield following the best, most central and most direct line which the face of the country will admit, between each other and the intermediate populous towns and villages, and the whole with London; first by the Midland Counties and the London and Birmingham lines, and secondly by the south-east branch and the London and Cambridge line. Whilst the lines are still direct and the levels and gradients so advantageous as to leave no chance that it can be hereafter superseded by any competing line"... "The two great post roads from London to North Britain by Newark and Retford, and by Nottingham and Mansfield, have been the principal means of communication between London and the North of the Kingdom, but if this plan is not accomplished the important advantages connected with the great lines of communication would be lost".

It will be seen from this that the wealth of the district was well realised, but the scheme was adventurous and rather optimistic and nothing came of it. However, to return to the subject of the chapter.



There was a scheme to Introduce steam haulage on the Railway however, as we see when reading another extract from Mr. Buxton's notes:

"The Mansfield and Pinxton Company held their meeting in the 'Swan' on 14th April, 18140, and a small model railway with a locomotive engine at work on it was exhibited in the large room at the Town Hall. The model was Mr. Killman's and showed a new system of railway travelling, being adapted in cases of lines requiring difficulties in ascents and curves to be surmounted; and therefore was considered to be well adapted for use on the M. & P. Railway with its numerous ascents and sharp curves".

The Pinxton tramroad seems to have survived in a fairly prosperous condition, for on 8th July, 1847, when the Midland Railway Company obtained an Act of Parliament for the purchase of the line, the life of the Mansfield and Pinxton Railway Company as an Independent concern came to an end, being bought for £21,066,13.4d.

We must now, in order to form a balanced picture of railway development in the area, trace the growth of the Midland Company in more detail and note the influence of the Mansfield and Pinxton in that famous company's inception and foundation - an influence not generally realised.

## CHAPTER II.

### Erewash Valley Railway: Formation of Midland Railway Co.

Although the Leicester and Swannington railway is the oldest section of the old Midland Co. to have been built as a (proper) railway, the Mansfield and Pinxton line was the second oldest tramway of that company in England, following the Gloucester and Cheltenham by about eight years. This Tramroad, as stated before, was connected to a branch of the Cromford canal at Pinxton, but had been built about 25 years after that canal. Indeed, the construction of that waterway and its connection with the south, foreshadowed what was to take place later when rail connexion was provided. The construction of the canal in the late 18th century had opened the eyes of the Erewash coal owners to the larger markets that their coals might secure, if they were to effect a means of communication with the south. They therefore determined to make, the Soar navigable from the Trent to Leicester. Opposition was stimulated by the Leicestershire coal owners who foresaw an invasion of their own markets, and eventually they forced the Soar Navigation Co. to provide a branch canal from Loughborough to their pits at Cole Orton and Moira. In 1798 this branch was completed, but owing to inclement weather was destroyed in the following winter. Meanwhile the Soar Navigation Co. prospered, and did so for more than 30 years. Their monopoly was limited however, for the construction of the Stockton and Darlington and Liverpool and Manchester lines opened the eyes of the public to the possibilities of railways, and before long the Leicestershire coal owners had obtained an act for, and started on the construction of, the Leicester and Swannington railway which was duly opened on 17 July 1832. Naturally this caused grave alarm to the Eastwood colliery people, as they saw their markets threatened. Matters, however, became more serious when negotiations with the canal firm broke down, the canal company refusing to lower their rates sufficiently to allow the coal to be sold cheaply enough in Leicester and district, to compete with that brought in by the Leicester and Swannington. Accordingly, at their meeting held at the Sun Inn at Eastwood, on 16th August 1832, the coal owners came to the decision that:- "there remains no other plan for adoption than to attempt to lay a railway from the collieries to the town of Leicester."

A committee of seven was appointed and it was decided that the line should be a continuation of the Mansfield and Pinxton tramway, and on August 27th, at a meeting held at Alferton, the co-operation of the public was invited. Words were succeeded by deeds, and on 4th October at a special meeting at the Sun Inn, it was unanimously decided

that a "railway be forthwith formed from Pinxton to Leicester, as essential to the interests of the coal trade of the district." £32,000 was promised by nine gentlemen, one of whom was John Wright of Butterley, while shortly afterwards the Duke of Portland, Mr. Coke, and another person each subscribed £500. This Eastwood meeting was also followed by one at Leicester; a local paper reporting this said, the attempt at reconciliation between coal and canal proprietors having failed, the coal owners "had adopted the only alternative left to them, of proposing the construction of a railway to Leicester, in which, on account of the benefits it would confer on the town, and also as a profitable investment of capital, the co-operation of the public was invited," and added "in the approaching session of Parliament, the legislative action is confidently anticipated for the construction of a railway from London to Birmingham," which "on the completion of the Midland Counties Railway, would admit of a grand central communication being effected between London and Mansfield".

By February 1833 although Mr. Jessop reported that it had not been possible to bring a bill into Parliament for the line during that session, they had received enough encouragement in London to prosecute the measure before the next session. Now what exactly occurred is rather vague but the schemes for connecting seemed to have fallen into abeyance, though some people maintain that the original scheme as proposed by the Eastwood coal owners was dropped, and that the one which transpired and was presented to Parliament, was entirely new. What does remain clear, is that the new line was merely an extension of the old one, being extended from Leicester to Rugby, the route of the original being followed in its entirety. The project, having the same directors and promoters, was pursued with the same objects in view. Indeed, these objects were even more pressing, for in August, Mr. Jessop reported the increase in the Swannington coal trade, the decrease in their own, and the necessity for a reduction in the price of their coal.

Matters were now proceeding at full speed in the promotion of the railway. Those who had subscribed to shares were asked to pay their deposit money; and Mr. Rennie, together with Mr. Jessop, surveyed the route. The line as planned ran down the Erewash valley to the Trent, and then on via the valleys of the Trent and Soar to Leicester, The length of 34 miles from Pinxton to Leicester is only two miles longer than a straight line. By November in the same year (1833), the parliamentary notices were lodged, and it was announced that the new railway, to be known as the Midland Counties Railway, was "intended to connect the towns of Leicester, Nottingham

and Derby with each other, and with London: a junction for this latter object, being designed with the London and Birmingham Railway near Rugby. A branch would also extend to the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire collieries, and to the termination of the Mansfield Railway at Pinxton." Two years was the time reckoned it would take to complete the Leicester and Pinxton part of the railway; and the connexion from Leicester to Rugby would be ready by the time the London and Birmingham Railway was opened.

Owing to the delay in the application for shares, an appeal to Parliament could not be made in March, but this delay was used to review the undertaking, and in the summer of 1835 the entire route was re-surveyed. Further, the services of Mr. C.B. Vignoles were obtained, and a little later he was made engineer in charge of the line. His report showed that the new line would be executed at a ruling gradient of 1 in 100 predominating from Leicester to the Trent, and also no curve of less than one mile radius. The people of Northampton wanted the railway to pass through their town, but the company did not see their way to accede to this proposal.

By this time £1,000,000 was the proposed capital, £800,000 being the sum required to complete the line. Of the £786,000 which had already been subscribed, £95,000 was from the directors, including William Jessop and James Oakes both of whom, it will be remembered, had controlling interests in the Mansfield and Pinxton. It is interesting to learn from evidence laid before Parliament, that by now the carriage of Mansfield stone, despite its remarkably fine quality, was such as to amount almost to a prohibition of the trade. Although the principal aim of the promoters of the line was jealously guarded - the coal master promoters of the Mansfield and Pinxton and Erewash Valley even going to the extent of having the bill watched in Parliament by a Mr. Talbot - they were to experience a rude shock.

The North Midland Company which had just come into being, cast an unfavourable eye at the seemingly innocent yet suggestive branch of the Midland Counties which ran up from the Trent Junction to Pinxton - known as the Erewash branch. Their fear was increased when it was suggested that the line should be extended northwards to Clay Cross and Chesterfield. They thought, and not unnaturally, that they might be forced to join this Midland Counties line near Clay Cross and thus lose their connexion with Derby, together with its Intended rates and profits. But the promoters of the Midland Counties had also to remember their own shareholders, for many of them resided in the north of England, and their main desire was a through route

from north to south. When the Midland Counties Co. saw that it had become a question of the Erewash line being abandoned or the bill lost, they quite willingly gave it up, and thus the bill for the rest of the Midland Counties Railways was passed. The vital stretch of line was missing; the stretch which had been most important to the original promoters, and by which they had hoped to revive their declining trade by the construction of a through line to the south. Mr. Oakes and Mr. Jessop were furious but could not at the moment do anything.

The work was now started in earnest and on May 30th 1839, the opening of the Nottingham - Derby line took place with the usual joyful festivities, and the Mansfield - Pinxton line still remained an isolated link in the chain of railways which was now growing nearer to Mansfield, for in the following summer, the rest of the Midland Counties line was completed.

This railway was now firmly established, but in the last few years a new railway had been in the process of formation. This company, the North Midland, had already made its powerful influence felt in its opposition to the Erewash branch. The main line of this company was intended to connect the towns of Derby and Leeds, and although conceived three years later than the Midland Counties, was born only one year after the opening of the Nottingham - Derby line. The line ran along the valley bottoms, being for the most part connected to the collieries and quarries high up on the hillside by ropeworked inclines, - as at Ambergate. The line was laid and planned by George Stephenson, and except for a short distance south of Clay Cross tunnel, no gradient exceeded 1 in 330. Urged on no doubt by the Erewash shareholders, Mr. Vignoles proposed a line which would serve as a continuation of the original Erewash portion of the Midland Counties, through the ridge up to Clay Cross and down to Sheffield. These views were submitted to Parliament not as competing plans, but on the North Midland bill proper. In the construction of the line, considerable difficulties had to be overcome. The tunnel under a hill south of Ambergate had to be elliptical in shape in order to stand the enormous pressure of the shale bed which lies above it. Even this was not strong enough and soon began to show signs of strain, and it was only after draining the shale bed and lining the tunnel with iron rails that it was able to withstand the pressure. Also the crossing of the Amber river and the bridging of the Cromford Canal over the railway provided serious difficulties owing to their close proximity.

Thus was the country on the west of Mansfield served by railways, yet the town itself was still cut off from railway development. Even now that the two companies were established and the main trunk lines completed, the competition which raged so disastrously between them, occupied all their respective time and money, and left little to the carrying out of the expansion, and development of other lines. Especially so did this apply to the proposed Erewash valley line, as the Midland Counties Railway were almost in a state of open war with the North Midland Railway, and any move on the part of the former to construct this branch would have been instantly opposed, as before, by the North Midland Railway, as suggestive of a plan to tap their line at Clay Cross, and thus divert their traffic. Thus there was little prospect of a line being made along the Erewash to connect with the southern terminus of the Mansfield and Pinxton Railway - and as yet there was no talk or suggestion that a line should be built from Nottingham to Mansfield - until the two companies were once again at peace.

Peace, however much desired, was not to be easily obtained; the Derby and Birmingham Railway, which was opened on August 5th 1839, besides being at open war with the Midland Counties over the question of fares between Derby and London, actually threatened the very existence of that company by the construction of a branch line from Whitacre Junction to Hampton in Arden (known at the time as the Stonebridge branch), by which the Birmingham and Derby Co. would have threatened the Midland Counties with direct competition for the traffic with London and the south. The projection of this branch was due to the predominating influence of the North Midland in the Birmingham company, the former directing that the proposed branch was only to be dropped if the Midland Counties Railway would abandon their Erewash Valley line - an indication of its importance - but this they refused to do.

It thus occurred that by 1844 the North Midland were in great financial difficulties, the Birmingham and Derby were fighting tooth and nail against the Midland Counties over the London - Derby fare, while this last named company had already lost most of its trade with London from Derby and the west to the Birmingham line. To the far seeing, though hard bitten, railway promoters and directors of the day, the only way in which these squabbles could be ended, and indeed the only way in which the respective railway companies could prevent financial calamity, was to sink their differences in amalgamation, which they did on May 10th, 1844.

## Chapter 111

### The Erewash Company Nottingham - Mansfield line, and Pinxton Tramway after 1847

At first, the new Midland Railway Company was more concerned with the strengthening of its position; and the amalgamation with the Birmingham and Gloucester, and the Leicester and Swannington occupied most of their attention. However, during the period in which the jealousy and suspicion of the North Midland Company had prevented the construction of the Erewash branch by the Midland Counties, the local coal owners had not been sleeping, and realising that no help could be gained from either companies, they determined to construct the branch themselves; and had formed a railway company of their own by 1844.

By that date, however, the rival companies had amalgamated, and realising the incongruity of having such a small but potentially important branch line owned by an independent concern, decided that it would be in their interest to gain control of this, and in February, 1845, before the Act to build the line was obtained the Midland Railway bought up the company, the price being a minimum guarantee of 6% per annum on a capital not exceeding £145,000. The line was opened in 1847, and although the traffic was at first small - this was partly accounted for by the fact that the Cromford and Erewash canals ran parallel with it for the entire length - it did not unduly perturb the Midland authorities for they realised that by continuing the line about 9 miles to the north, and effecting a junction at Clay Cross with the former North Midland's main line, a saving of 6 miles would be made over the Derby line, for traffic from the North to London. They would also place themselves in a position of having a through relief line to the north. This extension to Clay Cross did not materialise for a few years, as the incorporation of the London to York railway was occupying the full attention of the Midland Company, but after the passing of the Great Northern Bill, the minds of the Board once again reverted to the development and promotion of lines which would strengthen the position of the company, and at the same time give it access to new fields of commerce. Thus two years after the founding of the Erewash Valley Company, and one year before the opening of its line, the Midland Company, at a meeting in January 1846, accepted the Bill for the continuation of the Erewash line from Pinxton to Clay Cross and Chesterfield, and for the construction of branches to neighbouring coal fields. £230,000 was the estimate, and the Bill was eventually passed.

At this same meeting, another Bill was also accepted by the shareholders, authorising the building of a line from Nottingham to Mansfield. It was obvious that such a line would have encroached on the Pinxton tramway and this Company was approached with a view to amalgamate Extract from the notices in the "Nottingham Journal" reads:

"           Mansfield and Pinxton Railway.

    ...special meeting of the Proprietors of the above Railway held at the house of Mrs. Morton, the Swan Inn, on Monday, 13th July at 12 o'clock for taking into consideration the Terms of an agreement proposed by the Midland Railway Company relating to the Mansfield and Pinxton, and if approved, of confirming.

29th June 1846.

Geo. Walkden.

Clerk to M. & P.R."

The outcome was an Act passed about a year later for the Midland Railway to purchase and re-construct the Pinxton line, and to continue it to join the Erewash Valley Railway extension.

In 1847 the inhabitants could look forward to the establishment of good rail connexion with London by way of both the Erewash Valley, and Nottingham, and the fact that the inconvenience of the Pinxton tramway would in any case soon be removed with its rebuilding by the Midland Railway Company. Thus Mansfield would have a double outlet, one way via the Erewash Valley to Trent, and via Nottingham. The decision to construct a line from Mansfield to Nottingham would not come as a complete surprise to the local inhabitants - nine years before a scheme had been proposed, as mentioned previously, to connect Sheffield and Nottingham, direct by rail, which included the buying up and presumably relaying of the Mansfield - Pinxton railway, which, if carried out, would have given a direct line from Mansfield to the county town.

This scheme, however, had died a natural death, but more recently two new railways had been projected, one called the Boston, Newark and Sheffield Railway, which was to pass through Southwell and Mansfield; and the other which went under the high sounding title of the Nottingham, Mansfield and Midlands Junction Railway. George Sanderson, a well known Nottingham surveyor and architect of that period, and a man especially interested



In the promotion and construction of railways, was the surveyor of the latter. To quote from the prospectus:

"... Intended railway, to be called the Nottingham, Mansfield and Midlands Junction Railway, commencing by a Double Junction with the Midland Railway at, or near, the town of Nottingham, in the County of Nottingham, and terminating in the township of Tupton, in the parish of North Wingfield, in the County of Derby, at, or near, the Clay Cross station, on the Midland Railway, by a junction with the said Midland Railway - also an extension of such proposed Railway commencing by a double Junction with such proposed Railway, near to Kirkby Hardwick in the County of Nottingham, and terminating at Portland Wharf, near to White Bear Lane, in the Parish of Mansfield in the County of Nottingham aforesaid, or by a junction there with an intended Railway proposed to be called the Boston, Newark and Sheffield Railway, together with the several Intended or proposed Branches and Extensions".

The date of the plan is 30th November, 1845 and it will be seen that it was in direct competition with the Midland Railway.

According to Stretton, the real object of these railways was to allow the London and York Co. (which apparently was financially supporting them) to enter Sheffield, Chesterfield, Nottingham and the Erewash Valley. "So anxious were the promoters of the scheme to obtain the Mansfield and Pinxton that without waiting for their Act to be passed by Parliament they entered Into arrangements to obtain, and did obtain, the control by ownership of this old artery of traffic, a portion of which was to be used and converted into their Mansfield - Nottingham scheme".

The attitude of the Midland Company to the rival schemes was expressed by George Hudson at a meeting of the Midland shareholders at Derby when he stated that his company desired to come to a satisfactory arrangement with the competing parties. However, Parliament rejected the rival schemes; the Midlands Act for the Mansfield line received Royal Assent and powers were granted to raise a sum of £275,000 for the purpose of building the new railway.

The promoters of the rejected schemes were now placed in the position of owning, without Parliamentary

permission, a tramway which the Midland Company required (9). To get out of this fix they were only too willing to accept the Midland's offer of £40,000 of stock at par; and relief from this curious position was obtained on February 15th, 1848 by the issue of a certificate, from the railway commissioners, allowing the tramway to be amalgamated with the Midland Railway. This, apparently, was necessary before the Pinxton Company could be dissolved in accordance with the Act passed on 8th July 1847 authorising the Midland Railway to purchase the whole of the Pinxton line for £21,066. 13. 4d. and to convert it into a railway proper.

The line was to begin , "at Mansfield junction, close to the Nottingham end of the Midland Counties section, extending past Radford, Hucknall and Kirkby-in-Ashfield to the town of Mansfield, exclusive of a short curve  $\frac{3}{8}$  mile in length to give a direct route for coal traffic to the South, via Lenton North and South Junction without its having to enter Nottingham goods yard".

The work of construction was pushed on with vigour and in July 1848 it was reported that the Shoulder of Mutton (10) tunnel at Kirkby was finished and the workmen had a dinner to celebrate the event at the Blue Bell Inn, Annesley Woodhouse. By September, people were bringing meat and pies to the Kirkby Summit and then coming on to Mansfield and selling them at the market in competition with local tradesmen. The line thus being available from Mansfield Junction Nottingham to Kirkby,  $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles, was examined, and it is recorded that on Monday, September 23rd, 1848, a small party of Inspectors with two engines; one 30 tons and the other 36 tons in weight, made a trial trip to test the security of the lines, and two days later the line was passed as safe by a government inspector.

Notice was at once given that the railway would be opened for passenger and goods traffic to Kirkby from Monday, 2nd October, 1848, and there were three passenger trains a day in each direction on weekdays, and two each way on Sundays, 4th class fares were reckoned to odd farthings for  $\frac{1}{4}$  miles and in some cases were only  $\frac{1}{2}$ d, less than 3rd class.

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(9) It will be appreciated that as the company had not the sanction of Parliament to own the M. & P., they were unable either to work or sell it.

(10) After the hill under which the railway runs.

The timetable was as follows:

	WEEKDAYS.			SUNDAYS.	
	<u>1.2.3.</u>	<u>1.2.3.</u>	<u>1.2.4.</u>	<u>1.2.4.</u>	<u>1.2.3.</u>
Nottingham.	8.10	12.10	6.20	8.20	6.00
Lenton.	8.15	12.15	6.25	8.25	6.05
Radford.	8.17	12.17	6.27	8.27	6.07
Basford.	8.22	12.22	6.32	8.32	6.12
Bulwell.	8.27	12.27	6.37	8.37	6.17
Hucknall.	8.37	12.37	6.47	8.47	6.27
Linby.	8.41	12.41	6.51	8.51	6.31
Kirkby	8.55	12.55	7.05	9.05	6.45
	<u>1.2.4.</u>	<u>1.2.3.</u>	<u>1.2.3.</u>	<u>1.2.4.</u>	<u>1.2.3.</u>
Kirkby.	9.15	1.10	7.25	9.20	7.00
Linby.	9.24	1.19	7.34	9.29	7.09
Hucknall.	9.27	1.22	7.37	9.32	7.12
Bulwell.	9.35	1.30	7.45	9.40	7.20
Basford.	9.40	1.35	7.50	9.44	7.24
Radford	9.45	1.40	7.55	9.49	7.29
Lenton.	9.47	1.42	7.57	9.51	7.31
Nottingham.	9.55	1.50	8.05	10.00	7.40

It is fitting at this point to make some reference to Nottingham Station. Opened on the 22nd May 1848 in Station Street, in a district known as the Meadows, it covered an area of 600' by 94' and was generally of wooden construction, though the platforms were of stone, 21' wide. There was a large refreshment room provided. The traffic at the time can be judged by the fact that there were then only four trains a day to London.

The day of the opening of the line was the celebrated Nottingham Goose Fair, consequently it is recorded that "being fair week the number of travellers has been large", but this, adds a local paper, "cannot continue unless the amount of fare is reduced. The charge of 9d, - 1st; 6d. - 2nd; and 4d. for open carriages for travelling 2¼ miles from Nottingham to Radford will not answer; and 1/6d from Nottingham to Hucknall, 2nd class, when comfortable vans have brought passengers regularly for 8d, will certainly not drive vans off the road".

The old Pinxton railway had not yet been relaid so the portion of line between Kirkby and Mansfield was not yet ready as a railway proper, and it was proposed

to have a very small engine, with flangeless driving wheel capable of conveying a small carriage over the old tramway; however, an experiment proved that the rails were not strong enough to carry even a small engine. It was therefore determined that a small two-compartment passenger carriage should be worked by horse to Kirkby in connexion with all the trains, and this arrangement came into force on the same day - 2nd October. When it is recorded that instead of the three booked ones, upwards of twenty passenger trains left Kirkby for Nottingham on that Monday it is not surprising that the small horse carriage was of very little use, and "no little disappointment was felt by numerous parties who had had to walk from Mansfield to Kirkby to join the trains".

The works on this last and altered portion of the line were pushed on as speedily as possible and during this time, on March 9th 1849, old coins were found at Hermitage, near Kings Mill, during excavations. Papers compared the excitement to the California Gold Mania, which was then taking place. "The only other thing found was a piece of marble 1½" x 1¼" and two or three diamond shaped pieces of red, yellow and white marble found near the spot".

On Friday, August 24th, a contractor's engine (known as a Puffing Billie) came to Mansfield and remained in the station yard till evening. Being the first engine that had been seen in Mansfield, many persons were attracted to the spot to see it. Another came later and the two locomotives took away a long train of empty wagons. Quite a few people took a trip up the line and were "much gratified".

A party of Midland Railway directors visited Mansfield station on September 17th, in a double second class carriage, the first one to make its appearance in the town. In June, the station, which was uncovered, was under construction by Wood, of Derby, and took just over three months to build. This lay alongside the old tramway terminus, which was converted to be used as a goods station. As such it remains today and the original stone warehouse, built in 1819, is still in constant use. The Sunday before the opening of the station, we learn from Mr. Buxton that the workmen preparing for the event were addressed by a lunatic who came up to the wall of Broombank (the name of the asylum) overlooking the station. He talked a long time, saying "Napoleon was a great man, but a Sabbath breaker, and was subdued by his enemies". He threatened that the "artillery of heaven" would open on the workmen, and shortly after a heavy thunder storm broke and the workmen had to leave off and seek the shelter. At 8.0 p.m. on Monday evening, October 8th, 1849, a special train arrived at Mansfield, and shortly after, bills

announcing the opening on the next day were sent round the town. About 9.0 o'clock the next morning a large engine, with seven carriages came into the station with passengers and many Mansfield people came back with it for a trip. Just after it had left, the 10.45 a.m. train nearly had an accident, the coupling of one of the carriages broke, and they ran back into the station, but were fortunately stopped before any damage was done.

Thus it was on Tuesday 9th October, 1849 that the final portion of the Nottingham - Mansfield line was brought into use and we learn from the "Nottingham Journal" that -

"For a short line we should say it is one of the most ill constructed in the kingdom, many of the curves being so sharp as to create great fears for the safety of passengers...But our Mansfield friends have not shown great spirit in the preparations made to commemorate the opening; there being not so much as a single banner of any description, and the only sign of approval or disapproval on the first train leaving the station was the braying of an ass. This apathy, is however, partly attributable to the example set by the company, as it was not known, either privately or publically in Mansfield on Monday last whether the line was to be opened or not.

"And a day or two later- the working of this line bears out our saying "that it is a most ill constructed one as engines have been off the line in the station yard at Mansfield several times since the opening on Tuesday week. The curves are here so sharp that a small engine can scarcely pull a train of 4 or 5 carriages out of the yard. On Sunday morning last, as the train due at 9.0 a.m. was coming in, the engine went off the rails, and it took upward of half an hour to get it; on again; so that the train, which ought to have quitted Mansfield at 9.15 did not leave until 10 to 10.a.m."

At the same time as the Kirkby - Mansfield part, all the relaid Pinxton tramway was brought into use; and it was impossible, of course, to lay the new railway directly, on the old route, owing to its winding nature, and various deviations had to be made. These, where known, are shown on the map and it will be seen that most of the sharp curves were straightened out.

The line as it exists today is very similar to the 1847 relaying, though a few alterations have been made. About 1871, just before the Southwell line had been opened a deviation was made cutting out Kings Mill viaduct; the old line is still used as an empty wagon siding, though points at the southern end have been removed. At the time, a bridge was built over Sheepbridge Lane near the present engine sheds, and a small deviation was made here also. The junction at Kirkby was at the northern end of Summit pit, and passengers from Pinxton to East Kirkby, a mining village which developed about fifty years ago, had to travel to the station near Sutton, and change to a Nottingham bound train. In 1892 the layout was altered to its present course; branching to the right off the old route near the Great Central main line, and up a steep gradient of 1 in 45 to join the Nottingham line immediately south of Kirkby-in-Ashfield. The first train to use this curve was the 6.20 p.m. Mansfield - Pye Bridge on the 12th August. By this diversion one of the two level crossings over Station Street was dispensed with, and trains from Pinxton could serve Kirkby direct. Serious difficulties, however, are encountered in the starting of heavy goods trains on the steep gradient from Pinxton, and in consequence, a nuisance and serious stoppage to road traffic, as the crossing gates have, of course, to be opened before the junction signals can be pulled off. A few months after this a short  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile branch was made from Sutton Junction to Sutton town, where an adequate passenger and goods station was erected. The line was opened on May 1st, 1893.

Before this date a fairly extensive network of branches had developed between the Mansfield - Nottingham line and the Erewash Valley Extension. The first branches from the Mansfield line at Radford, and joins the Erewash line at Trowell, its purpose was to make through running possible between London and the North via Nottingham without having to pass through Trent Junction. The first of the new service of express trains from London to Bradford passed over it on 1st June, 1880.

Two years later it was followed by another through link between Mansfield and the Erewash line, by the opening on 12th August 1879 of a line from Basford to Bennerley Junction. This had been authorised 10 years previously on the 25th July 1872, and was built principally as a colliery line. Passing within about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Strelley we are reminded of the Old Coalfield mentioned in the opening chapter of this book, for although it has now ceased to be worked, traces of former workings still remain in the names of "coal engine" near Wollaton, and "Engine wood" near Nuthall.

It was from this field that the Erewash furnaces originally obtained their fuel supply. The line, however, was, designed to provide an outlet for the coal lying to the west of Hucknall Torkard; and included in the Act of July 25th 1872, power was also granted for the making of a line North to Watnall New Colliery. The line was later continued to High Park and Beauvale Colliery eventually linking up with a series of lines built from Langley Mill under powers granted in Erewash Railway and Branches Act of 1845.

Apart from these Collieries the Mansfield line also directly serves various collieries; at Kirkby (Summit Pit), Newstead, Linby, Hucknall and Bestwood. It will be seen that the expectations of the Midland Railway concerning the Mineral wealth of the area, together with the hopes of the colliery promoters were justified, and today the line is perhaps one of the most important in the district.

The period during which these lines were authorised and built corresponds with the dates of the opening of the smaller branches in North Nottinghamshire. They were built as part of a plan to attempt to exclude the Great Northern Railway from the Nottinghamshire coalfield, about which more will be said later.

CHAPTER 1V

Worksop and Southwell Bill:  
Southwell line described.

During the period of expansion with which this chapter deals, the development of railways in the area is taken in strict chronological order. We will deal first with the construction of the Mansfield - Southwell line, and then with the Worksop line and its attendant branches these, of course, being constructed some years after their parent line.

It should be mentioned now that the powers for the construction of the Southwell line were contained in the same Bill as the Mansfield - Worksop, and the Midland directors, as we shall see later, were at first unfavourable to its construction. Let us now trace the development of events which led to the construction of these two lines, culminating in one Bill for the authorisation of both of them. The Retford - Mansfield branch proposed by the Great Northern as an alternative to the Bill, was, of course, only concerned with the Worksop part of it, and not with the Southwell line. In view of this it is convenient to study the motives which inspired the construction of the two lines separately, and deal with the Southwell section first, as it was completed about four years before its parent line.

In dealing with these lines it should be remembered that their function was not that of a branch in its strict sense of the word, but rather as connecting links. Indeed the object which inspired the construction of the Mansfield - Southwell line was not merely to connect the town to Southwell but rather, by effecting a connexion east, to open up fresh areas there, and to provide better means of through communication between east and west Nottinghamshire. As to the need for this latter, there was little doubt, for the natural division of the district into the manufacturing area of the west, centred round the Erewash Valley, and the agricultural area mainly centred round Newark, had, since the 1790's led to the continual exchange of products between them. Previously the route had been down the Erewash, and by canal on to the Trent through Nottingham to Newark, or since 1846 by the Nottingham - Newark railway. Ever since the Mansfield - Pinxton tramway had been running, however, some goods had travelled by Mansfield, and with the construction of a line from there to Southwell, this small stream might easily develop into a flood, and the importance of the town rise accordingly. Indeed so far, the above mentioned branch to Newark had been the only line promoted by the Midland to the east of Nottingham, this having been constructed as part of the company's policy



of consolidation; for the development of the G.N.R. had made the Midland Railway very fearful for the safety of their eastern boundaries, for Mr. Hudson said he considered it "a matter of policy to show the advocates of the Great Northern that the old established companies could do the work as well as any new projectors, and could even supply a part of the district to which the Great Northern was looking while others were thinking about it". Also the interest shown by the G.N. in the South Yorkshire coalfield made the Midland doubly anxious for the safety of the Notts, and Derby which was then being developed. Thus at the time when the Midland Railway Company were getting their Bill for the construction of the Mansfield - Worksop line, they cast anxious thoughts to the safety of the area lying to the East of Mansfield itself, for the promotion by the G.N. of a line from Mansfield to Retford in opposition to this Midland line awoke the directors to the fact that lying between the Nottingham - Worksop line in the west, and the G.N. main line in the East, was a vast expanse of territory as yet undeveloped by railway, but rich in potential mineral wealth. They had also to reckon with the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire's main line, from Sheffield through Worksop to Retford, while the running powers granted to this company into Mansfield as a compensation for the M.R.'s use of their line into Retford, was a serious thorn in their side.

Accordingly they decided that whilst getting powers from Parliament for the construction of the Worksop line, they might as well safeguard the area in the east, and connect Mansfield to Southwell by rail, by this, not only securing the area for themselves, but providing a continuation of the short branch from Southwell to Rolleston Junction,

This plan also had the added advantage that it would be difficult for either the G.N.R. or the M.S. & L.R. to oppose such a scheme as neither ran into Mansfield, and a branch line constructed into the area from either of the company's main lines would not provide the same service as the Mansfield - Southwell branch, with its outlet at both ends. Just as the Worksop branch provided an outlet to the north via the M.S. & L. or G.N., so also would the Southwell line, via Rolleston Junction, Newark Lincoln, and the G.N. & G.E. Joint line. Possibly it may have been for this reason that the G.N. did not oppose the scheme, as it was almost identical with the Mansfield - Worksop branch as far as they were concerned, in any case the G.N. authorities must have

been rather surprised at the Midland company's intention to construct the line, for although the area was rich in mineral wealth and although it is true the G.N. could easily invade it, the Midland directors themselves did not view the scheme with great favour.

Their attitude was as follows:- If the G.N. did decide to invade the area, their scheme for constructing the line could quickly be formulated and owing to the fact that it had connexions at both ends, would in all probability be favoured in preference to the G.N.'s plans, Secondly, although the area was rich in mineral wealth, the immediate prospect of it being rapidly developed was not great. Thirdly, the cost of the line would perhaps not warrant its construction and fourthly, and most important: the coal rates from Mansfield to Newark would have to be lowered owing to the shorter route. Swayed by these arguments therefore, the Midland directors were at first unfavourable to the immediate construction of the branch.

Now a local gentleman, John Barrow of Southwell, owing to his influence and wealth, forced the directors to acquiesce to his wish, and to construct the branch; stating that if they refused, he would build the line himself. Forced with these considerations, the Board decided to build the branch, happy only with the thought that this would eventually secure the fresh potential fields of traffic and safeguard them from any impertinent attempts on the part of the G.N. to invade their territory, which they hoped at one time to be able to preserve for themselves by, "suggestions" instead of "decisions".

As to the actual desire of the inhabitants for a railway in the area, one may safely state that their attitude was the same as their forefathers had been to the mechanization and industrialisation with which railways were associated - an attitude admirably expressed in James Prior's book entitled "Forest Folk". It should be remembered that the Forest of Sherwood still existed in much greater evidence then, than now, agriculture still being the main stay of the people, and even if no visible signs of collieries were evident, schemes to develop the fields were in the offing, and in any case the products of the rich agricultural land lying between Mansfield and Southwell would provide sufficient traffic until the pits were sunk.

In any case the directors were glad to make use of the anticipated "farm traffic". They used this potential traffic to show that there was a supposedly very pressing need for railway communication into the area for its farm

products alone, and they stated that it was to provide an outlet for these goods that the line was to be built; and also on account of its value in the future when the collieries would be built. The reader may wonder why the directors emphasised so much the farm traffic and let the real motive, which had inspired Mr. Barrow's threats, that of providing an outlet for the prospective coal traffic lie quiet - though present - in the background. The answer is not far to seek. If they had laid stress on the coal side and allowed the farm traffic to be eclipsed, it is quite possible that Parliament would have told them to wait until the pits were sunk, and working, and not to anticipate traffic before it occurred, and the Bill would have been rejected and the aims and hopes of John Barrow would certainly not have been realised.

We must also remember that at this time the Midland and Great Northern companies were in a state of war over the coal rates between the South Yorkshire and Derbyshire pits. The influence of this war made itself felt in the projection of this railway, for the Midland might have suspected that if the G.N. ever decided, as they did later on, to invade the heart of the midlands again (they first planned this in 1863), they might do so by building a railway from Newark to Mansfield under the same pretext as the Midland, namely to serve the agricultural district. If this had been done, they would have been more favourably placed than by extending a line from Nottingham giving them easier access to the pits in the Langwith area, Teversal and Doe Hill; while if the line had continued south through to Nottingham along the present course of the G.N.R. this, with the Nottingham - Derby - Marston Junction and Pinxton branch (G.N.) would have made their position exceptionally strong. Inspired by these notions, and urged on by John Barrow, the Midland company pressed forward their plans, and in 1865 the Bill was passed authorising them to build a railway from Southwell to Mansfield.

It is interesting to wonder; if the line to Worksop had been built as originally proposed in 1860 (11) how the Southwell branch would have approached the town and to which station it would have entered, or whether it would have been possible to plan it to gain access to both. Although the line did not present any great engineering difficulties -

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(11) It was to have joined the Mansfield - Nottingham line south of Mansfield, and another station built.

described in detail later on - the building of the London extension and the greatly increased liabilities of the company caused an extension of time to be sought for the construction of the branch. This was granted together with the Worksop section, and greater headway was made with the Bedford - London line. Nevertheless due to the exertions of the engineer in charge, Mr. John Bayliss, the Southwell line was opened for traffic on 3rd April 1871.

The contractor of the line was a gentleman named Edward Terry who went bankrupt during his sub-contract (under Joseph Firbank) for the building of the Settle - Carlisle line some years later. The comparatively short time taken to construct the line as compared with the Worksop one, was due probably to the fact that the land traversed is of an easier nature, and also the Southwell line was single track against the double-tracked Worksop branch. It should be remembered that Southwell was already connected with the Nottingham - Newark - Lincoln line by a single line from Rolleston Junction, opened in 1846, due principally to its influence as an important ecclesiastical centre. The new line was in effect an extension of this branch from Rolleston, westwards.

The station at Southwell is not the original, structure. "The Midland Railway Company erected a handsome station at the foot of Burgage Green in 1847" at the opening of the line from Rolleston. It was a wooden affair, but was taken down and re-erected at Beeston. The present station was then built - this happened probably at the time of building the extension to Mansfield.

To return to the engineering works of the line; after leaving Southwell the line runs in a fairly straight direction and there is a gradual rise up towards Mansfield as it leaves the Vale of Trent. The several bridges which span the small roads and cart tracks are of cast iron, unlike the ones which carry the roads over the railway, which are of stone and brick construction. One of these stone bridges between Mansfield and Rainworth collapsed shortly after the opening of the line but did not cause any serious dislocation of traffic - as such an incident would do today. As the line approaches Rainworth, works become heavier; a fairly steep cutting through Python Hill into Rainworth station is followed by a high embankment which takes the line through the village. Three more cuttings totalling  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles, and Southwell Road, Mansfield, is crossed by a girder bridge of 66' span. Just before this is reached, the old race course, now a recreation ground, is passed on the right. A tar works is situated here adjacent to the railway, the siding of which was at one time used as a rail head for sand brought from nearby

quarries. The line again enters a cutting. This is not too long, and is considerably wider in the sense that now, one side of it forms part of a sand quarry, where, if we are fortunate, we may watch a Sentinel locomotive merrily hauling a couple of loaded wagons up a 1 in 15 gradient. There are a few sidings situated here. On the other side of the bridge under Windsor Road, we get our first real view of Mansfield, and on our right is a Corporation refuse dump at one time a sand quarry, though the sidings to it have since been removed. They lay out of use for many years and at one time a suggestion was advanced for converting the disused quarry into a recreation ground and park, and erecting a station on the site for the use of excursion trains. Where these trains were to run to (or from) does not transpire, but it would be difficult to imagine any hard headed Lancashire man wishing to come to Mansfield rather than Blackpool. To continue with our journey. The line now runs on an embankment crossing Littleworth by a girder bridge. Soon after this, a branch joined the line, coming from a sand quarry and this was taken up some time ago, due to the inconvenience of the level crossing over Forest Road. A new connexion was made, near to Nottingham Road which went under Forest Road, and this is still in use and can be clearly seen by the sidings which adjoin the line. We are again on an embankment, and Nottingham Road is crossed by a stone bridge of limited headroom, and then almost immediately we pass over the L.N.E.R. Mansfield - Nottingham line. Here the line divides at Mansfield East Junction signal box; one line turns sharply to the right and joins the Nottingham line to run into Mansfield station, while the other continues westward to join that line near the engine shed.

This junction is of great importance in local railway operation, but before we go on to consider the intricacies of the working, a description of the two large stone viaducts which carry the lines over Quarry Lane would be of interest, and complete our description of the engineering works of the line. The two bridges form in themselves the heaviest of the works; both were built to carry the tracks over the river Maun - from which the name of Mansfield is derived - which at this point runs in a particularly deep valley. This valley has been widened and dammed up from time to time to provide water power for mills, and the railways pass over Field Mill dam itself, which provided power for driving what was in its time reckoned to be the largest water wheel in the country. Local stone was used in the construction of these bridges, which are about 50'

above the river, and each nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile long. A fuller description is now given of the two bridges, the passage capturing the spirit in which the line was first constructed and the pride with which the viaducts were viewed by the local inhabitants. The latter part of the description although perhaps an anti-climax, is typical of the atmosphere which prevails on the branch today, with its closed stations and cancelled passenger service.

"These two noble structures, built entirely from Mansfield stone are a tribute to the bold conception and foresight of the engineer in charge of the line. The stately piers rising loftily from the valley of the Maun, the grand sweep of the bridge as it crosses over the valley, and the inspiring beauty of the proportional design are a reminder of the glories of symmetry and execution of an age which has passed. The work of time, however, and the effects of constant weathering have only served to mellow the beauty of the massive structure, the growth of moss, the constant drip of rain water have long since transfigured the picture of the radiant bridge with the sunlight reflecting from the sparkling Mansfield stone, into a mellowed but inspiring monument to the foresight and vigour of John Barrow. Thus the bridge today presents a spectacle of the works of man harmonised by nature, so that the cluster of fowl pens in the valley bottom, and the banks of reeds glistening in the sun remind us that many years have passed by since the Maun was a fast flowing and burbling stream abundant with fish and potential power, for the now defunct mills on its course."

The bridge which carries the line from Mansfield is exactly  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the station, while the other branch of the junction leads to Mansfield sheds and Joins the Nottingham line 788 yards to the west. This latter section presents rather a serious bottleneck, as it is only a single line, dealing with most of the traffic from the branch to Kirkby concentration yards, and tends to block the line to the engine shed.

As is to be expected the branch is worked, together with its colliery branches, on the electric token block system, and a list of token stations is given here.

Mansfield East Junction.  
Mansfield Colliery Junction.  
Rufford Junction.  
Blidworth Junction.

Contd.

Farnsfield.  
Kirklington.  
Southwell.

It will be seen that a separate token is provided between Mansfield East Junction and Mansfield colliery. This is due to the fact that there are a great number of coal trains from that colliery which go to Kirkby sidings. From here to Southwell, there are numerous colliery branches, and although these are not specifically mentioned in this chapter, their location and importance will be seen from the map.

Thus we come to the end of our description of the Mansfield - Southwell line, and as we look back through the pages we can see the influence of the Great Northern on the Midland's policy, and see how the first of the lines built during this period of expansion, not only served to open up fresh ground, but also to remain as one of the most important coal lines in the district. In this next account of the Worksop line we can see the struggle foreshadowed in the Southwell line between the Midland and Great Northern companies, culminating in the opposition by the latter; an opposition, be it remembered, which threatened not only the Worksop, but the Southwell line.

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As has just been pointed out, the Bill for the construction of the Mansfield - Worksop line also contained powers for a branch to Southwell, which was constructed first, and with which we have now dealt. It was, however, its parent line which was of greatest Importance at the time, as several abortive attempts had already been made to construct a line, as we shall see later.

Moreover, the town of Mansfield, and southern Nottinghamshire was still cut off from the northern part of the county, except by a slow and devious route.

CHAPTER V.

Description of Mansfield - Worksop line:  
branches lying to the west.

Ever since the opening of the branch to Mansfield in October 1849, the station there had remained a cul de sac and at that time there seemed to be little prospect of any further development or extension of lines in the surrounding area. The Midland Company were busy with lines which would extend their boundaries rather than with ones which would only develop areas already served. Besides, there were several more important works to be effected, as for example the Erewash line extension from Pinxton to Clay Cross, which, although only on the verge of the area with which this book deals, is important as it shortened the distance that traffic had to travel when going from Mansfield northwards, and also as we shall see later, it was to this line that the various cross country branches from the Worksop line were made.

By 1864 the Great Northern Railway had become firmly established and as already seen, were looking out for new areas to which they could extend their rails. The Nottinghamshire coalfield looked inviting and the lack of rail connexion in the Dukeries area certainly gave them ample excuse for railway development - particularly the country lying to the north of the town for here the coal was nearer the surface than that lying to the east, and more advanced measures were in hand for its mining. Accordingly the G.N.R. started investigations as to the best plan for an invasion of the area. Their invasion of the Derbyshire coalfield, planned in 1863, had revealed certain serious difficulties owing to the routes intended, whereas if they succeeded in entering the area from the north it would not be a difficult matter to extend branches southwards to the south Derbyshire coalfields.

Of these investigations on the Great Northern's part, and their serious implications, the Midland Company were not unaware; accordingly at their February meeting, 1864; despite their heavy liabilities due to the London Extension, numerous hostile schemes projected by rival companies had compelled them to take action in their own defence despite the inconvenience of the time. To quote the chairman:

"It would have been more consonant with the feelings of the directors if they had been enabled to state that there was not a single Bill to be brought before Parliament; but they felt that they could not shut their eyes to



what was going on around them, for there were districts that required railway accommodation and other parties were already at work in the Midland district. I believe that this further construction is necessary for the stable and permanent position of the company".

Nevertheless, before this time, when circumstances had compelled the directors to act, several abortive attempts had been made to remove the inconvenience felt by the lack of communication between north and south Nottinghamshire, and more locally, by the termination in a dead end at Mansfield, of the railway. The project had even been developed so far that a Bill had been presented to Parliament in 1860 for the construction of a line to Worksop, but due to some serious differences of opinion which had arisen between the Dukes of Newcastle and Portland about the course of the line over their estates, it was eventually withdrawn. However, the ever-present fear of the Great Northern's proposed extension, and the fact that the two noblemen were still carrying out negotiations, coupled with the proposed G.N. invasion of the South Derbyshire coalfields in 1863, made the Midland directors doubly anxious to construct the line. Accordingly when by the summer of 1864, the differences between the two Dukes had been settled and they had made it known that they were willing to support the line, it was decided to re-survey its course.

The difficulties of the Company were not yet over, for the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Ry. Co. saw in the Midland's scheme to use their line from Shireoaks to Retford, a chance to invade the territory of the Midland railway and decided to promote a line of their own to tap the town of Mansfield - which they accordingly did. The Midland managed to quiet this scheme by agreeing that if the M.S. & L.R. would withdraw their scheme, and allow them to use their line to Retford, they would give that company running powers into Mansfield station from Shireoaks Junction. This agreement pacified the Sheffield Company, who were engaged in greater schemes elsewhere, but the G.N. now saw a plan for fishing in troubled waters, for they decided to promote a line from Retford to Mansfield direct - avoiding Worksop. This was actually a culmination of their desire to penetrate the Midland coal field as a whole, for it would have placed them in easy access of the Erewash valley; while if they continued it south, their position in the Nottingham area would have been considerably strengthened. The M. R. Co. decided that further concessions, especially to the G. N. would be both useless and harmful - for it would be a very expensive price to

pay to offer them running powers over the line to Mansfield in order to quieten them - even assuming they got permission to use the M.S. & L. line from Retford to Shireoaks. In view of this, therefore, the Midland decided that their success over the G.N.'s competing plans would be strengthened if they could improve their 1859 Worksop project. At that time the line was to have left the Nottingham - Mansfield branch at a point south of Mansfield, and pass the town to the west, thereby avoiding a deep depression. The scheme was considered at the time to be the best and almost only practical route, for to continue the line directly northwards from the old Mansfield station would have involved a high viaduct over the town, followed by a deep cutting, though after these initial works, the ground became flatter and more suited to railway construction. Another station, also, was planned, but this would have been a considerable distance from the town, and with two stations, the bother and expense of a shuttle service between them would have had to be considered. Again the plan to pass through Creswell Crags had to be abandoned owing to an infringement into Welbeck Park. When the line was re-surveyed, these points were all borne in mind - points which provided the G.N. with some good capital against the scheme, and eventually it was decided to carry the railway over the town on a viaduct, to build a new station in the centre of the town by the side of the old one, and at Creswell to go further west and tunnel under the hills.

Such was the Midland's new scheme presented to Parliament, as against the G.N.'s branch from Retford to Mansfield direct, and suffice it to say that after viewing them, the Mansfield - Shireoaks line was accepted. This time the merchants of Mansfield seem to have been more in favour of the railway, for "two gentlemen, cotton doublers, who employed 360 hands", explained the inconvenience in carrying on their business with Lancashire, "We may lose more", said one, "by reloading, in the waste that it causes, than the cost of the carriage two or three times over", A Mr. Wm, Bradshaw, ironfounder of the town, was also strongly in favour of the line for improving its communications and he "complained of the circuitous route by which Mansfield had to be approached". Apart from the benefits which would be conferred on the town itself, there were the famous magnesium limestone quarries near Mansfield, and those lying between Whitwell and Shireoaks, while the proximity of the line to Sherwood Forest gave it contact with one of the most valuable forest areas in the country. The value of this is shown from the fact that "mere thinnings of 4,000 acres of woodland fetched from £6,000 to £10,000 a year; and these were used chiefly for pit and manufacturing purposes". The line also passed over an area rich in mineral wealth for its

entire length, and as the opening of the line drew near, acres upon acres of coalfields were let to coal owners. Indeed, so great was its speculation that the Worksop line would appear to exceed in value that of the Erewash valley. Thus was some of the evidence presented on the Midland Company's behalf to Parliament, while against it, the Great Northern could only state that Retford was the second largest cattle market in the kingdom; that the Mansfield limestone quarries would be benefited by the Retford route as well as the other; and that whatever went north-east of Retford, should be carried direct to Retford. We think that from this evidence the reader will agree that both the companies considered the Mansfield - Worksop line to be the most useful, and thus the Midland company's Bill was passed.

The cuttings at Langwith were one of the first jobs to be started, as the stone from these was used for the construction of the bridge which begins immediately north of Mansfield station, and, as already outlined, was the heaviest engineering work of the line. The 15 spans, reaching about sixty feet high, carry the line over Church Street, and then on to an embankment, over Bath lane; through a deep cutting and on another embankment over Woodhouse Road into Mansfield Woodhouse station. From here the line runs a little easier, and just after passing Pleasley Junction, it crosses Pleasley Vale on a viaduct, and then through one or two cuttings to Shirebrook. Here are more cuttings, this time of hard magnesium limestone; and so to Langwith, six miles from Mansfield station. From here, for about three miles, the railway runs over fairly level ground, and in a direction almost due north. Passing through Elmtun and Creswell station, the Worksop line turns more towards the east, and the only tunnel is now reached, which carries the railway under Bakestone Moor. From here it is in a cutting for a good way past Whitwell station, and then on to an embankment for a mile. On the left are the famous Steetley quarries, whose potential traffic was mentioned in the evidence placed by the Midland Company for the construction of the line - and they are still working hard today. Past here, on another embankment for a mile, and then to Shireoaks South Junction, where the line divides to join the M.S. & L. railway, one spur towards Worksop and the other towards Sheffield. At the time of its building, it was rumoured that the works were heavier than was necessary for an ordinary branch line, as it was eventually to be part of a main line from London to Scotland. It seems doubtful that this had any foundation as the line is fairly undulating, and there is a two mile gradient of 1 in 120 north of Whitwell. Eventually, in the same year that the Midland Company abolished second class fares, the line

was opened, the first of June being the exact date - the year, 1875.

The first train, at 7.10 a.m. on the Tuesday morning set off from Mansfield station with nearly 100 passengers though most of them, which included many children, went only as far as Mansfield Woodhouse station just for the sake of travelling on the new line. A description of the journey on this train is given in the "Mansfield Advertiser" of June 4th, and many references are made to the beautiful country which, it was expected, would give the line much picnic traffic in fine weather.

"We congratulate our fellow townsmen and neighbours that the events so wearily anticipated, and so long delayed, have at last taken place...Leaving Creswell we pass through the tunnel, that dreadful tunnel which has had the whole cause of the delay thrown upon its rugged sides. Many a pound of gunpowder had to be burned before the metals could be laid between Creswell and Whitwell... At Whitwell, the train was greeted with quite a respectable cheer, the whole village seemed to have turned out to give it greeting. The branch line on the right is being constructed for His Grace the Duke of Portland for his own special use, and at his own expense, it is to be about two miles long and will run up to Welbeck Abbey... The stations are all built of brick, with pointed roofs, except the one at Mansfield Woodhouse, which is really a model station. This building is entirely of Wood and is relieved with some very pretty ornamentation. A kind of entrance hall, one side of which is nearly all glass, leads to the ticket office, an apartment which, unlike many others of its kind, has not been erected with special facilities to let the wind in. The ladies' waiting room is a little gem, tastefully furnished and carpetted, and the whole aspect of the place is a pleasant contrast to the dreary disheartening dens which used to be put up for the punishment of passengers in the earlier days of railway enterprise. The company seems to have overlooked the fact that gentlemen, as well as lady passengers, would use the trains, and there is a strange absence of gentlemen's waiting rooms along the line, a defect which ought to be remedied."

It will be seen from the timetable reproduced, that there were six trains a day leaving Mansfield on this line, but on the M.S. & L. trains to Sheffield, tickets must be taken to Shireoaks or further, so it was the Midland Company

only that benefited from local traffic to intermediate stations, on their trains to Worksop and Retford. There was expected to be much use made of the passenger trains from Mansfield to this latter place, a big market town, as the old route by train was via Nottingham and Grantham.

The value of the Mansfield - Worksop line showed itself even before its opening, at the time when the Great Northern were invading south Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.(12). The Sheffield company in 1871 decided to attack the Midland by proposing to build a line from Doncaster to Worksop, and from there to the London, North Western Railway at Market Harborough. The Midland Company using their Worksop branch, countered this by proposing to extend their Worksop Branch northwards from Shireoaks Junction to Doncaster, to gain greater and more direct access to the North Eastern Railway, and also to tap the south Yorkshire coalfields. They also proposed to construct some lines which would provide a more direct link between Sheffield and Manchester, and thus strike at the very heart of the M.S. & L.R. Due to the Indifference of the L.N.W.R. to the above scheme, the Sheffield Company decided, two years later, to approach the M.R. Co. to effect a compromise. This arose out of a correspondence initiated by Mr. Price, the Midland chairman "to 'harmonize' the projects of their companies." The result was a line from Askern Junction on the North-Eastern, to Rushton, a place on the M.R. line just north of Kettering, via Ollerton, Lowdham (on the Trent) and Melton Mowbray. A junction was to be made here with the newly authorised Midland line from Nottingham. This would not only provide access to the South Yorkshire coalfield for the M.R., but also an outlet to the south for the Sheffield Company making them independent of the G.N.R. That Company countered the scheme by proposing, in conjunction with the L.N.W.R. a line from Market Harborough to Newark with a branch to Leicester, granting the L.N.W. running powers to the Derbyshire and South Yorkshire coalfield. Due to the unsatisfactory decision of the Parliamentary Committee, "the 'wonderful scheme from everywhere to everywhere' was reduced to a local coal line from Shireoaks to Conisborough" (near Doncaster). It was not surprising that under these circumstances its promoters decided to withdraw it altogether.

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(12) The Bill for the construction of the G.N.R. westwards from Nottingham was passed on June 3rd, 1872.

We have now described the Mansfield - Worksop and Southwell lines in detail, but the importance and true value of them cannot be appreciated without some reference to their branches. These, built to open up new areas and to serve newly opened collieries, were constructed also to connect the smaller villages to the town of Mansfield, and in this latter respect differ from similar lines built ten or twenty years later. It will be realised that the buses would now render such passenger services useless. The construction of the G.N. Leen Valley lines also acted as an extra spur to the directors, thus we can see in the construction of these lines the struggle between the M.R. and G.N.R. brought to its conclusion. No further lines were built by the two companies in this area except for a few short branches built from those already described.

These, by their individual construction, mark the various stages in the growth of the development of the coalfields. Indeed it is really due to the existence of two small, but potentially important coal lines constructed to isolated collieries in 1863 and 1875, that the extensive railway network lying to the west of the town developed. These were:

1. Westhouses to Teversal (1863). and

2. Staveley to Bolsover (1875).

and they formed the basis of the series of connecting lines built between the Mansfield - Worksop and the Erewash Valley lines which were constructed to develop and tap what were then known as the Hardwick coalfields. The construction of this network, which we will deal with in three parts, safeguarded quite securely the area from the Midland Railway against any invasion either from the M.S. & L.R. or the G.N.R.

#### A. Westhouses - Pleasley - Woodhouse,

It was in 1861 that the Act of Parliament was passed, authorising the Midland Company to build a line from a Junction of their Chesterfield line near Westhouses station, to Teversal. Thus seven years elapsed before the next Bill for a continuation of the line was put forward and two further Acts were necessary before the line eventually Joined the Mansfield - Worksop line at Pleasley:-



from it we find ourselves running along the valley side. Soon we leave the Meden as it turns off to the south and the valley alongside our course is crossed by a viaduct of five spans. This, having weakened considerably in the last few years, has been strengthened by the erection of a heavy wooden scaffolding. Here the railway crosses over a road and also the Leen Valley Extension of the G.N.R., and then turns to the south-west, coming to Pleasley station, three miles from Woodhouse, where it enters the more hilly country near Hardwick Hall. A deep cutting, broken only in a few places carries the line to Teversal. The drab houses of the mining villages nearby present an ugly contrast to the pleasant country through which we have just passed. From now on to Westhouses the line runs fairly easily; a short cutting preceding and a short embankment after Tibshelf station, being the only works necessary to bring the line to the Erewash extension.

The line, when built, served about five collieries and was the only outlet for the new coal traffic, though a branch was built in 1897 from the G.N.R.'s Leen Valley extension (which also serves Pleasley Colliery) to Teversal and Silverhill collieries. Mention should also be made of a branch which commences in a triangular junction round Westhouses station and runs eastwards along the valley of Normanton brook for about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles and serves Blackwell, Winnings A & B and New Hucknall collieries; there are connexions from this branch to the G.C.R. main line, which crosses it.

B. Staveley - Seymour Junction - Pleasley.

This line was also built in stages as shown:

<u>Date of Act.</u>	<u>Line Authorised.</u>	<u>Collieries etc. served.</u>
1863	Staveley - Bolsover.	Ireland, Bolsover.
1873 )		
& )	Bolsover - Glapwell	( Bonds Main, Glapwell,
1875 )		( Ramcroft.
1883	Glapwell - Pleasley	

Note: Part of the line proposed in the 1863 Act was abandoned by another Act two years later. The 1873 Act authorised the Bolsover - Glapwell line but the Act of 1875 authorised a deviation of the northern section.

During the latter part of the time when the line was under construction, the Great Northern invaded the area. This made the Midland very fearful, for if their rivals continued the Leen Valley line any further, their monopoly of the traffic in this area would be ruined. Thus



as soon as the pits were sunk, so the line was extended with all possible haste, and was opened throughout on 1st September, 1890.

Leaving the junction at Pleasley the line is carried on an embankment but soon reaches the high ground which fringes the borders of Derbyshire, and runs alongside a stream as far as Rowthorn and Hardwick station; on the left is seen Hardwick Park with Its wooded banks rising steeply. Immediately after the station the line enters a tunnel 5/8 mile long and on emerging from the northern side, the country is soon left behind, for we reach the mining village of Doe Lea, with the nearby Glapwell colliery. This tunnel became rather unsafe for rail traffic in later years, and on 28th July, 1930, the line from Pleasley to Glapwell was closed for all traffic and the rails from Glapwell through the tunnel were removed in February 1933.

During the war years the tunnel was used for storing ammunition and previous to this it had been used for a short time by a firm to grow mushrooms in. The station building here had been used as a dwelling house, but due to the fact that there was no water supply - this having to be fetched from the village - it was finally discarded and later taken down. The path of the abandoned line is still easily traced, while Glapwell station can be seen from the Mansfield - Chesterfield road. It still remains in a state of repair, being used as offices for the yardmaster at the sidings adjoining Glapwell colliery, though the track through the station has been removed. From the colliery northwards the line is in daily use and after leaving the pit runs alongside Stockley brook, following at first that stream and then the Lea, from which its name was taken. Half way between Palterton and Sutton (near to the disused Bonds Main colliery) and Bolsover stations, the L. D. & E.C.R. passes over the branch, while the great collieries and coal tar plant which dominate the latter town can be seen. This is the last station before Seymour Junction is reached in two miles.

#### C. Seymour Junction - Elmtun and Creswell.

As mentioned before In this chapter, a branch had been authorised in the same Act as the Mansfield and Worksop line from Creswell to Seymour Junction, and from contemporary reports work on the eastern part was started when the Worksop line was built, though this branch was not opened until 1st November, 1888.

From the junction at Creswell, it turned off sharply to the west and after a short embankment, entered a fairly deep cutting of the usual magnesium limestone. For about one mile the line runs side by side with a road, but shortly before reaching Clowne, road and rail diverge, the line continuing in a deep cutting until the town is reached. Here it runs parallel to the L.D. & E.C.R. branch from Langwith to Beighton junction, and despite the fact that the two lines run side by side through the town - only about 50 yards separate them - they are not connected. Leaving Clowne the line drops through a cutting and, after a short branch to Oxcroft No. 3. colliery, the L.D. & E.C.R. passes over it. It then continues in a series of cuttings and turns gradually southwards to join the line from Pleasley at Seymour junction, the junction being marked by some sidings and the disused Seymour colliery. From here it runs through Staveley to Chesterfield by a circuitous and rather lengthy route to its approach to the main line at Tapton (14) and it is not proposed to continue with a detailed description of the line beyond this point, suffice it to say that it abounds in steep gradients and sharp curves.

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For the sake of completeness a mention must now be made of those collieries served directly by the Mansfield - Worksop line. These include Sherwood colliery (Mansfield) served principally by the L.M.S. though the L.N.E.R. use their running powers to work trains over the L.M.S. line to Shirebrook. The pit at this latter place lies between the Leen valley extension line and the L.M.S., and is served by both railways, and a little further on a one-mile branch goes off to serve Warsop Main, to the east. Past the junctions at Shirebrook, the line runs parallel to the L.D. & E.C.R. branch to Clowne and Beighton, and serves Langwith and Creswell collieries. Just through Whitwell tunnel there is a connexion with the colliery and in another two miles Shireoaks No. 2. Is reached, and shortly after, the old Steetley quarries,

A commentary on the method of operation of these, and other colliery lines, appears in chapter 7.

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(14) On the northern outskirts of Chesterfield. For a long time, the residence of George Stephenson was at Tapton House, Tapton,

CHAPTER VI.

Development of G.N.R. and G.C.R. lines  
in the area: The L.D. & E.C.R.

We have now traced the development of the Midland System in the Nottingham and Derbyshire coalfields, an expansion at first unhindered by any rival company, but later seriously threatened by the Great Northern, and later still, but not to such a great extent, by the M.S. & L. R. In this, and the next chapter, we shall deal with the actual invasion of the area by these companies, and the formation of two new ones - the L.D. & E.C.R. and, more locally, the Mansfield Railway Company.

Of the actual passing of the G.N. Bill this book is not concerned, but suffice it to say that the construction of the line which it authorised, provided a definite boundary in the east beyond which the Midland would be able to proceed only with the greatest difficulty, if at all. Farther, as already mentioned, the proximity of the new line to the midland coalfields caused the Midland Company to view the G.N. as a "potential parasite threatening their very life blood,"

At first the new company was too engaged in the construction of their own lines to consider invading the Midland's territory and incurring the cost of an expensive legal battle, but three years after the passing of the G.N.R. Bill in June 1846, they started on the building of the "towns" line as it was called - a line to run from Peterborough to Retford. This definitely placed them nearer the Midland system while if a connexion was to be made with the M.S., & L.R. at Retford, the G.N. would be able to obtain access to Manchester. Thus by 1852 the new Company was becoming quite firmly established, and realising by their traffic with, the South Yorkshire coalfields what a remunerative commodity coal was, they hit on a scheme to gain access to the centre of the midland coalfields - Nottingham itself. The scheme was as follows.

In 1846 a Company known as the Ambergate, Nottingham, Boston and Eastern Junction Railway Company had been incorporated, and was empowered to build a line as implied by its name. Their success was due to the fact that the Company had received the blessing of "King" Hudson who, by promoting branches from the lines terminus at Grantham, opened in 1850, to a branch of the Eastern Counties at Peterborough, and also by a line from that same Company's line at Wisbech to the Midland's branch at Newark, hoped not only to strengthen the M.R.,

and the E.C.R., but also to place a solid block in the way of the G.N. and thus secure fresh area for the Midland to extend its influence. Due to the proximity of the Ambergate line to the Midland, and the fact that it had obtained permission to use that Company's station in Nottingham, it seemed that its absorption by the Midland Railway was imminent. Up to 1852, however, it had retained its independence, but now the expense of maintaining a large amount of canal property which had been forced on it by Parliament had led to financial weakness. Nevertheless, it had for two years, from 1850 to 1852 carried on a local goods and passenger service from Nottingham to Grantham. Impressed by the potential importance of this line, Mr. Graham Hutchinson, a prominent G.N. shareholder, decided to obtain a monopoly of shares in it. This he succeeded in doing, and thus prevented the Midland, or London, North Western from gaining control of the Company, defeating their proposal for amalgamation by his vote alone, though the terms they offered were good - being "a 4% permanent guarantee."

Consequently when in the spring of 1852 the G.N.R. came forward with their offer of amalgamation, the influence of Mr. Hutchinson was sufficient in itself to ensure its being accepted. Thus in May of that year when the towns line was nearly completed, the Ambergate Company, for such it was called, signed an agreement with the G.N. by which the latter Company thought to obtain access to Nottingham, and through that town to the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire coalfields by a route as good as that of the Midland Company. It was obvious that such a scheme could not go unopposed by the Midland, threatening as it did the very heart of the system. Although it was too late for them to obtain a controlling interest in the Ambergate Company, they were fortunate in getting a G.N. shareholder, by the name of Simpson, to bring a petition in Chancery against his own Company's chairman to restrain him from carrying out the agreement with the Ambergate, on the ground that in signing it he had acted beyond his powers. Despite the able defence of the G.N. chairman by his son, Mr. E.B. Denison, an Injunction was granted restraining the Company not only from working the Grantham line, but also from guaranteeing it a dividend, the Injunction coming into effect on the 28th June 1852.

This was the more serious as in the following month the line from Retford to Grantham was opened to goods traffic while a fortnight later, on August the first, passengers were carried. Now despite the Midland Injunction a connexion was effected with the Ambergate line at Grantham, and Nottingham was brought in direct communication with London by a route other than the

Midland. Although the G.N. were unsuccessful at their first attempt to take over the Ambergate line, that Company remained, to use the words of Mr. Grinling, (15) in potential alliance with the G.N., pending the passing through Parliament in the next year of an Act to legalise their amalgamation, and in their time tables of August 1852, advertised a service to and from Nottingham, via Grantham, by which the time occupied in making the journey was shorter than that taken by the Midland, and London, North Western. This was, of course resented by the two Companies, who decided to defend their rights in no uncertain manner; and an amusing incident can be related which took place at the time. It is an extract from Grinlings "History of the Great Northern Railway".

"...on the opening day, 1st August, the passengers from Kings Cross were actually drawn into the Midland Station at Nottingham by a Great Northern engine, the officials there decided that the time had come to take active measures to defend their rights. Accordingly they got a posse of Midland engines together, and sent them, as on an elephant hunt, to hem in the Great Northern trespasser on all sides with its own kind; and although the driver of the latter - according to an eye-witness - made a desperate effort to charge through his captors, he was, of course , unsuccessful, and had to submit to see his locomotive borne away into Imprisonment in a disused shed. The rails leading to this were then pulled up so as effectually to cut off escape..."

The G.N. authorities defended the legality of their action and produced documents showing that the Ambergate Company had hired the engine from them, but it was not for seven months afterwards that they secured the release of their engine.

Despite this action on the part of the Midland authorities, the Ambergate Company had a perfect right to run trains into Nottingham Midland station and the through connexion from Nottingham to Kings Cross could be maintained. In regard to their goods traffic the two companies were at a greater disability, having to use the terminus at Colwick. Clearly such a state of affairs was undesirable. The cost of building a new station would be, however, excessive and Mr. Denison hoped that It might be possible to come to some satisfactory arrangement with the Midland. This hope was strengthened

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(15) "History of the Great Northern Railway" ( 1898).

by the fact that the relationship between that Company and the L.N.W.R. was not so strong as it had hitherto been, principally due to the fact that their negotiations for amalgamation had failed: and as a result the L.N.W.R. had turned its attention towards amalgamation with the Great Western Railway. Accordingly Mr. Denison wrote to the Midland proposing complete amalgamation of the two railways. It had so happened, however, that a few days before, the L.N.W.R. had also written to the Midland Company, once again proposing the merging of those two Companies; probably having been frightened by their action in leasing the Little North Western. (16) Indeed, so determined were the L.N.W., that the consent of the shareholders was obtained, and a Bill deposited in Parliament for the session of 1853.

Nothing remained for Mr. Denison to do If he wished to gain a firm footing in Nottingham, but to extend the Ambergate line into the town itself and construct their own station. This he decided to do and in the same session that the Midland and L.N.W. had laid their plans for amalgamation, Bills were deposited for the absorption of the Ambergate line into the G.N.R. and also for the extension of that line into Nottingham.

These amalgamations in themselves would seem to have provided the railway world in general, and Parliament in particular, with some food for thought, for by 1853 a crisis had arisen in the affairs of the principal railway companies. By this year nearly every large town in the country was connected with the metropolis by more than one line, causing much cut-throat competition, as Instanced at Nottingham by the capture of the Great Northern engine. To the companies, the only solution seemed to be extensive amalgamation, and the Bills before Parliament would test the feeling of the country in the matter.

The magnitude of the decision was so great that it was decided to hold up the Bills and thrash the matter out by a Select Committee. As some understanding was necessary between the G.N.R. and M.R. over the question of the former's access to Nottingham, it was agreed between them that the G.N.R. and Ambergate Companies should be given permission to use Nottingham station for London traffic. Owing to the decision of the Parliamentary

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(16) The 'Little' North Western Railway operated between Skipton and Morecambe.

Committee to uphold the Cardwell Act, (17) the amalgamation of the L.N.W.R. and the M.R. was withdrawn. To avoid any further infringement on Midland territory, the authorities at Derby decided that in the circumstances a treaty with the M.S. & L.R. would be desirable and accordingly this latter company and the M.R. soon came to a working agreement which effected a strong barrier against the Great Northern. Further, the drawing together of the M.R. and the L.N.W.R. had facilitated the development of the Derbyshire coal traffic which the latter Company had hitherto not been anxious to accept. By 1854 this traffic had grown to such proportions that it was almost equal to that of the South Yorkshire coalfields.

There was, however, one bright spot on the horizon for the G.N. - their amalgamation with the Ambergate line. This had been obtained from Parliament in 1854, and in the same session they also gained permission to extend the line into Nottingham itself.

The terms that the G.N. authorities had agreed to, for the power to work, lease or purchase the Ambergate Company, were to pay them 30 to 35% of the gross receipts of the traffic; this agreement to take effect from April the first. The importance of this line as far as the G.N. was concerned cannot be overestimated, as not only did it provide an effective weapon for both defence and attack, but also enabled the G.N. to tap the Derbyshire coalfields should they feel inclined to do so. During the next six years, the chief event, so far as the Great Northern and the Midland were concerned, was the breakup of the alliance which had existed between the L.N.W., M.S. & L. and the M.R. So much was this the case that through trains were now being run between Kings Cross and Manchester via Retford. The G.N., however, had still to reckon with the Midland's coal traffic to London which they were busy developing, having just built a new coal depot there. Further, the buying up of the South Yorkshire Railway by the M.S & L. had inflicted a serious blow on the G.N. Also, the agreement made by the chairman of the M.S. & L.R. in 1861, to allow the Midland

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(17) The Cardwell Act: A committee was set up in 1852 and during the next year made inquiries into railways, the result of its investigations being a Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1854, commonly known as Cardwell's Act. It directed railways to afford all reasonable facilities for the carriage of goods and it forbade the giving of preferences as regards rates, because by giving preferable rates to various manufacturers, railway companies could enrich some and ruin others. The Act remained ineffective for many years.

access to Manchester, had not only annoyed the G.N. but the Midland were now proposing to construct an extension to London of their own. This new extension was warranted, chiefly by the fact that their coal traffic from the now rapidly expanding Derbyshire coalfields was enormous.

Against these omens the G.N. decided that their best means of defence lay in attack; they therefore decided that if only they could tap the Derbyshire coal-fields they would make up for their loss of the South Yorkshire fields, and might even hope that the M.S. & L.R., seeing that the G.N. could afford to be independent of the South Yorkshire Railway, would lower their terms for allowing the G.N. to have a share in the traffic. Convinced that it was essential for them to get a footing in the midland coalfields in the summer of 1861, the G.N. obtained permanent possession of the Ambergate Company "at a guarantee to Its shareholders of £4. 2. 6. dividend (with the right to purchase the whole property on the repayment of the capital at par value)".

In the autumn of 1862 they followed up this Bill with another by which they hoped to extend the Grantham line up the Erewash valley from Colwick into the centre of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire coal district. This new line was planned to run side by side with the Midland's, and went under the name of the Codnor Park line, as this was the place where it terminated.

The Midland looked askance at this latest Invasion of their preserves, but before long saw a way of escape from this serious menace. There already existed a junction at Nottingham between the old Ambergate line and the Midland, and ever since 1852 some traffic from the Derbyshire coalfields had passed over it, though little of it reached London via the Great Northern as the Midland had, not unnaturally, refused to make through rates. Indeed from Clay Cross, in the Derbyshire coalfields, to the junction with the Ambergate, Nottingham, Boston and Eastern Junction they charged a rate of 2/2d. per ton which was so excessive that the G.N. found it impossible to compete with the Midland's own route via Hitchin and Rugby.

It now occurred to them that If they agreed to lower their rates they might succeed in persuading the G.N. to abandon their expensive plan of constructing their Codnor Park line . In this they were successful and we may wonder If the original Intention of the G.N. in promoting the line, had been to force the M.R. to lower their rates by the threat of constructing the proposed lines. The Midland authorities however, were determined, if possible, to gain something in exchange for their concession to the



G.N. and received in return free access to their new St. Pancras depot. The Midland trains having at that time to use the G.N. main line from Hitchin to London.

These arrangements were embodied in what is known as the Coal Traffic Agreement by which "the rates from the Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire collieries, carried by either or both companies to London should be equitably adjusted to each other so that, as far as possible, the through charge from the various collieries should be made fair one with the other". "Thus the heart of the Midland could once again beat and send forth its black blood down its arteries without fear of having them cut, but sorry in that it was not as thick as it used to be".

The Midland authorities decided that if ever they were successfully to free themselves from intimidation they must of necessity have their own line into London, for on their access to the capital depended not only the value of their coal traffic but also the entire prosperity of the Company. They drew up plans for a line from Bedford, via Luton and St. Albans to London and their Bill received Royal assent on the 22nd June 1863.

By 1868 the south Yorkshire coalfields had for various reasons dropped greatly in production but these conditions had not affected the Derbyshire collieries and due to the Coal Traffic Agreement, the rates for the conveyance of coal to the London markets compared very favourably with those from the south Yorkshire pits. The G.N., however, were anxious to try to develop their south Yorkshire trade and succeeded in getting the M.S. & L.R. to rearrange their rate for the conveyance of coal over the South Yorkshire lines to Doncaster. This, of course, upset the Agreement, and the Midland Company indicated that Arbitration was the only means to settle the difficulties satisfactorily. The differences which arose between the Midland and the G.N. were such that arbitration was unsuccessful and a war of rates developed between the two companies. This ended on 1st April, 1870; the Midland withdrawing the through rates from Derbyshire to the G.N. which they had enjoyed since 1863. Thus the Great Northern were cut off from a trade by which they had profited to the extent of £50,000 a year - the result of championing the cause of the south Yorkshire coal owners who had never shown their gratitude in the slightest.

There remained only one alternative - to invade the Derbyshire coalfields by rails instead of threats. For it was inconceivable that the G. N. should be cut off

from the coalfield which had now definitely superseded the south Yorkshire as the chief source of coal from which the London supply was drawn. Thus if the G.N. did not attempt to gain readmission to the Derbyshire fields they would not only lose any major claim they might have for supremacy in the London coal traffic, but also any claim to be a coal carrier of any status whatever.

For these reasons, therefore, the G.N. directors decided to revive their Codnor Park scheme of 1863 but with some slight alteration. The starting point, Colwick, remained the same, but a deviation to the north was made to carry the line through the Bestwood estate in order to tap the valuable coal producing land there - estimated at 4,000 acres. Turning to the west it passed over the Leen Valley and the Midland's Mansfield line on a viaduct 100 yards long, to Kimberley whose population of 4,000 had asked the Company to provide communication for them. This, of course, the Great Northern were only too willing to do as it lay at the mouth of the Erewash valley which, as in the time of the Mansfield - Pinxton Railway, was the heart of the midland coalfield. Up the valley, therefore, the G.N. engineer surveyed his line, terminating, strangely enough, at Pinxton. Instead, however, of limiting their invasion to the Erewash valley, they proposed to construct a branch west from Kimberley to Derby - the brain of the Midland Railway system ever since the time of King Hudson. Further, the new line was not intended even to stop here, but was planned to be continued through Mickleover and Etwall to a junction with the North Staffordshire Railway at Egginton from where running powers may have been granted to Burton-on-Trent. Beyond this it also provided for branches to Heanor and Trowell. These new railways, 40½ miles in length, were estimated at a cost of £1,097,467. In view of their relationship with the South Yorkshire the G.N. could congratulate themselves for making provision for tapping Derbyshire. Thus, despite the heavy liabilities to which the directors were committing the Company, the shareholders readily gave their approval. The Bill, though, had yet to receive the sanction of Parliament and it was to be expected that it would not pass without opposition from the Midland Company.

From the first, the G.N.R. had been noted amongst the coal owners for its championship of the South Yorkshire coalfields, so that any scheme by which they intended to open up the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire fields was viewed with suspicion by the Midland. But the latter Company could oppose the scheme, knowing they had the backing of the coal owners, with whom they had always been in great alliance. The advantage the G.N. would have had over the Midland by reason of their line running

through to London, whilst the Midland experienced much delay in having to run over the G.N. line (via Hitchin) was soon to be lost, for by the time that the proposed lines would have been completed, the Midland would have constructed their own line to London.

As a compensation for the loss of their advantage, the G.N. directors decided to turn to the Midland's old friend and ally, the L.N.W. and agreed to give them running powers over the new line from Burton-on-Trent to the coalfields. Having done this, a meeting of the Erewash Valley coal owners was called, and the G.N., by demonstrating to the representatives that the new lines would give them access, not only to London at Kings Cross, but also at Euston, gradually won their support. They also pointed out how they had satisfactorily carried coals to the benefit of the Nottinghamshire coal owners from 1863, and so on the 3rd June, 1872, the Bill was passed through Parliament authorising the Company to construct their new lines.

The construction of these lines was pushed on rapidly, the work being let out in contracts; the Erewash valley line to Messrs. Benton & Woodiwise, helped by Mr. Firbank. Bad weather unfortunately hindered the work, and the cutting at Kimberley -  $2\frac{1}{2}$  - miles long through magnesium limestone, acted as a bottleneck - a temporary railway, however, was laid at the side on a gradient of 1 in 35. By the end of August, 1875, the G.N. had thus regained access to the Erewash valley after being excluded for  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years, and in half a year they profited by £32,000. It was not until a year later that this line was fully opened, and by then the second and third contracts for the extension had only just been let.

By 1879, the G.N. had discovered that in assuming the Erewash valley to be the source of the entire coal trade in the area, they had been mistaken. Some years previously, the Midland Company had realised the importance of the Leen valley and had accordingly promoted branches to cater for it, Now their rival saw that the value of the coal traffic passing over those lines was almost the same as that over the Erewash lines, and as it was entirely a Midland Company monopoly, decided to tap it as soon as possible. Accordingly in the session of 1880 the G.N. directors promoted a Bill for a branch eight miles in length from their existing line at Bulwell up the Leen valley to Newstead to connect en route with Bestwood and other important collieries. This was duly passed, and by 1881 the work on the line had been commenced. In July, coal trains were running from Bestwood colliery; and on 18th October, mineral traffic began in earnest. Almost a

year later, on 2nd October, 1882, the Leen Valley line was opened for passenger traffic.

Three years later the Company obtained permission to construct a nine mile branch to Heanor colliery at an estimated cost of £200,000. This was not the last of the Company struggles for Derbyshire coal, for four years later the M.S. & L.R., looking round for further extensions, could not see why they should be excluded from these coal fields.

The Sheffield Company already possessed a suggestive looking branch running south as far as Beighton, and they decided to promote a Bill for the 1889 session to extend this branch to make an end-on Junction with the G.N. Leen Valley branch at Annesley. The reason for their extension was not cloaked under any excuses, and needless to say the extension was obnoxious to the G.N.R. There was a further reason, for at the same time, while they were going south, the Metropolitan Railway were extending their line northwards. At this point Mr. Watkin, the manager of the Sheffield Company wrote to the general manager of the G.N. - Mr. Oakley - proposing that the new line that his company was building should be an "open road to give the district the greatest possible accommodation". With this object in view, they proposed to give the G.N. running powers into Sheffield, if they would permit them to run into Nottingham over the Leen valley in exchange. The importance of a decision of that nature was such that it was considered by a special meeting of the G.N. directors. Their apprehension was increased when they considered that their own trade to Manchester was by no means secure, for any further scheme to bring the Sheffield Company south to London, would mean that the latter company would secure an independent access to the Metropolis, and their own route via the M.S. & L.R. through Retford might be closed. In their reply, therefore, the G.N. agreed to give their rivals running powers to Nottingham If they would (a) guarantee them through running powers to Manchester, and (b) not to promote, or assist any other company or person in promoting any extension of the railway south of Nottingham. The M.S. & L. were unable to accept these conditions, especially the last clause, and various modifications they suggested were likewise dismissed as unfavourable by the G.N. directors.

These negotiations having failed, the Great Northern strongly opposed the Bill when it came before a Commons Committee on 14th May, 1889. By giving the L.N.W.R. running powers, the same that the G.N. had refused, (and therefore using the same tactics as the G.N. itself had used in their Invasion of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire coal fields) the Sheffield Company carried its

Bill to construct a line south from Beighton Junction to Annesley, with a branch to Chesterfield, despite fierce G.N. and Midland opposition. It was therefore decided to oppose the Bill in the Lords; and here the contest ended in a compromise. The M.S. & L.R. were allowed to build their branch and also gained the running powers into Nottingham, but agreed not to use them as a means of going further south. The G.N. were, of course, to receive running powers into Sheffield, but, if they so desired, the M.S. & L. could continue their own line southwards from Annesley. That they intended to do this, became obvious in the autumn of 1890, when they deposited a Bill to construct a line 92 miles in length to start from the new branch at Annesley and to run via Nottingham and Leicester to the Metropolitan Railway at Quainton Road, but this was, after strong and vigorous opposition, rejected. At the same time, the G.N. drew up a Bill for extending their Leen Valley line northwards to Langwith, a distance of some twelve miles, but owing to other Parliamentary business the Bill was withdrawn. Despite their defeat, the Sheffield Company still kept up the idea of the London extension, realising that if only they could get rid of the G.N. opposition, they stood a reasonable chance of success; and negotiations were revived between the two companies. After various alterations had been made, the plans received the agreement of the G.N.; who, in addition to withdrawing their opposition, granted the M.S. & L. running powers over some of their lines north of Doncaster. In exchange, they were given similar powers over the Sheffield Company's line north of Nottingham and Sheffield, and also secured a half share in the new and commodious station to be built at Nottingham. With these running powers, the G.N. were provided with an alternative route from London to Manchester; and in 1892 the Bill authorising the extension to London was passed, together with powers for the G.N. to build a line in Nottingham from their station, to the new one. In the same session, the latter company revived their Leen valley extension plan which they had withdrawn less than a year ago.

In 1894, two years after the M.S. & L. line from Beighton to Annesley had been opened, the first sod of the extension from there to London was cut by the Countess of Wharncliffe, and it was hoped at the time that it would be ready for traffic in three years. This proved to be rather optimistic, for it was not until March 1899 that a regular passenger service was started. Arkwright Street and Carrington Street stations were used in Nottingham; the new Central station, or Victoria as it is now called, was not finished until some time afterwards. Mr. Edward Parry of Nottingham

was the engineer in charge of the Rugby - Annesley section.

Whilst this new trunk line was under construction, work was quickly undertaken on the G.N.'s Leen Valley extension, and the line from Kirkby to Teversal, opened February 1897, and to Shirebrook a year later, was the last of their lines to be built in the area. A triangular junction was made at Kirkby, but the northern leg of this was taken up about 1905.

The M. S. & L. changed their name in 1897 to the Great Central Railway and ten years later they purchased a line known as the Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railway with which company some details will now be given.

The L, D. & E.C.R. line did not reach, as was implied by its name, either the East Coast or Lancashire, though this was not due to want of trying but rather to the insurmountable difficulties which beset it. In order to connect the Manchester Ship Canal at Warrington with the east coast, it was planned to carry a line through Knutsford to Macclesfield where a branch was to be made to Manchester via Stockport. Continuing eastwards, the line was to pass through Chesterfield and to Sutton-on-Sea where extensive and well equipped docks were to be constructed. The hilly nature of the country and consequent high cost of engineering works, coupled with the great expense of the docks - £70,000, this being partly due to the expensive coal shipping appliances which were to be installed - increased the total capital needed for the railway to £5,000,000. Towards this £250,000 was subscribed by the G.E.R. who hoped to be able to tap the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire coalfields by making connexion with the L.D. & E.C.R. at Lincoln by means of the G.E. and G.N. joint line.

Thus in 1892 work was begun on the Lincoln - Chesterfield section, which was planned to tap the coalfields directly. Three years later, however, the directors being unable to, and seeing no further chance of, raising the £5,000,000 capital required, decided to abandon the expensive Chesterfield - Warrington section. Consequently two years later the line from Chesterfield to Lincoln was opened, in December 1896, together with a branch from Shirebrook to Beighton which, after the opening of the Sheffield District Railway in 1900, gave connexion with that city.

In 1899, the directors decided that a continuation further east to Sutton-on-Sea might prove remunerative and persuaded the Derbyshire coal owners on the route to guarantee to ship one million tons of coal a year to that port. Of course by abandoning the Warrington section, the

Company had lost the chance of securing the express passenger trains of the G.N. from London to Manchester, which then travelled over the M.S. & L.R. via Retford. It had been intended to make a southern curve at Tuxford for this purpose. So great was the competition between the G.C., G.N. & M.R. for the transport of coal, that the new company did not gain their expected returns on the traffic. Therefore, for financial reasons, the directors decided to abandon the Sutton-on-Sea continuation, but they made arrangements with the G.C.R. to run coal trains to Grimsby Docks, which involved a far more circuitous route.

It was only to be expected in view of the railway politics of the time that the company would not remain independent for long, existing as it did with no coastal outlet, and serving no town of any size. The three major railway companies in the area were all interested in the line and although it made connexions with both the G.N. and the M.R. - at Shirebrook - it was the Great Central which eventually purchased the line in 1907. Junctions were made in October of that year from their main line at Duckmanton - these being of a rather peculiar nature with very sharp curves.

It is interesting to note that If the extension westwards had ever been built, it would have crossed Monsal Dale on a viaduct 543 yards long and at a height of 272' - a record for this country. Tunnels with a total length of 4,210 yards would also have been necessary, while west from Chesterfield, for a distance of eight miles, there would have been a gradient of 1 in 70 and a drop of 1 in 72 from Buxton to Macclesfield,

Whilst on the subject of lines proposed by the L. D. & E.C.R. which never materialised, mention should be made of a proposed branch to Mansfield. It should be pointed out that during the '90's, a body known as the Mansfield Railway Commissioners had been established to report on the town's railway services, and had already been actively engaged in providing better railway facilities, which Included retiming of some Mansfield - Nottingham trains. What they were really hoping for, was for another railway company to serve the town and thus, by introducing competition, improve communications and lower the fares. With this aim in view they had several times approached the M.S. & L.R. and G.N. with the hope of getting these companies to tap the town. The proposals unfortunately had met with little success, so the Commissioners now turned to the L.D. & E.C.R., who appeared only too willing to construct a branch from their line near Warsop. A report on the proposed line appeared in the "Mansfield Chronicle" of

4th December 1896, before the opening of the Lincoln - Chesterfield line.

One year previous to this, in November 1895, a very ambitious scheme which would have placed Mansfield in a much more important position had been set on foot, but like other schemes of the time, does not seem to have aroused great enthusiasm amongst the commissioners. The project, according to an editorial in the "Mansfield Reporter" was intended to commence with a junction on the North Staffordshire Railway about four miles north of Burton, running through Ashbourne to Hopton and Wirksworth, connecting here with the High Peak Railway, and then on to Cromford, Matlock Bath, Ashover and Clay Cross, joining the M.S. & L. at Williamthorpe and thence, via Sutton-in-Ashfield and Mansfield to Retford. An alternative route from Clay Cross to Tibshelf, Mansfield and Retford was proposed, but as this would not give the L.N.W.R. a direct run from Birmingham to Sheffield which they required as the price of their support, the original scheme was adhered to. Nothing more was heard of this venture - the reason for the apparent lack of local interest shown by the Commissioners was probably due to their favouring the L.D. & E.C.R. proposals, as this was an already established Company.

As time progressed, this company (the L. D. & E.C.) began to feel the difficulties of its financial position, and some delay occurred in the carrying out of its project. Possibly with the hope of hastening the matter, the Commissioners passed a resolution urging the Company to proceed with the scheme with all possible speed. At this stage a hitch occurred, due to the L. D. & E.C.R. Company's proposed level crossing on Pelham Street, in Mansfield, for owing to the great inconvenience which had been caused when the Midland Railway had a crossing in Portland Street, the Commissioners were strongly against any level crossing in their town. The railway company could not see their way to alter the route to avoid this, and so the local body who had at first urged the new branch, now opposed it. It was this, coupled with the company's low financial state that caused the whole scheme to be dropped, and it was never revived. Later, in 1907, the Great Central Railway purchased the undertaking.

After the collapse of the L.D. & E.C.R. Mansfield line, a further project which appears to have aroused local interest, but about which little is known, and one which never materialised, is mentioned in the January 29th 1897 issue of the "Mansfield Chronicle". The new railway was intended to connect Ashbourne, "through the Matlocks, Ashover and Clay Cross and then through to Mansfield and Retford, joining the east of Derbyshire with the west,



and the Staffordshire potteries with the Nottingham and Derbyshire coalfield." "The whole of the tract of land has been surveyed over and over again, and every landowner concerned has given consent to the new railway." The report which is describing a meeting held by the Interested parties at Matlock continues by stating that the project was discussed with the various representatives of the districts concerned "who were unanimous for increased railway facilities for the district served. A couple of gentlemen were appointed to carry out an 'Important resolution' and report." Nothing further was heard of the project.

The Great Central Railway was aware of the value of a railway line to Mansfield and about 1907 proposed a scheme for a branch to be made from their main line near South Normanton, to proceed in the direction of Huthwaite, through Sutton - with a station at New Cross - to Mansfield. A deputation from Mansfield which waited upon the Company asked for the line to be extended direct to that town from Annesley, but this proposal did not meet with much favour. Members of local authorities and industries visited the manager of the Great Central in May, and were very hopeful of the line being built from Huthwaite and extended to the L. D. & E.C. Railway, but the plan fell through in the manner of the day.

CHAPTER V11

Mansfield Railway Company and colliery lines in the East Midlands coalfield.

Notes on the working of colliery branches.

We now come to the last of the railways with which the book deals, apart from the later colliery branch lines, and it is fitting that this line should be one promoted by local men to serve their town. We have traced the growth of lines built to serve the colliery district, and seen how first the Midland then the G.N. and lastly the L. D. & E.C.R. had invaded the area. And now we will see how a group of coal owners rebelled against the charges which were being made to transport their coal and, as the G.C. scheme had fallen through, decided to promote a line of their own, just as their distant forefathers had done, only this time it was not canal owners who were the cause of the trouble, but a railway company - the Midland Railway Company - and the trouble did not lie in the west but the east.

As was mentioned in chapter 4, when the Midland directors presented evidence to Parliament for the construction of the Mansfield - Southwell line they said that while there was coal to be mined it did not in itself provide sufficient reason for the construction of the line - yet it was principally to tap the potential fields that the line had been built. Twenty five years later, at the turn of the century, the development of the coalfield was no longer a potential possibility, and the Midland were beginning to enjoy the fruits of their toil and patience. However, enjoying a total monopoly as they did, their rates were not what one would consider as particularly low, and before long this resulted in the leading coal owners getting together to see if they could not have a railway of their own to take the coals away.

Also, since the '90's there had been a general desire for another railway to tap the town, and as both the G.N.R. and L.D. & E.C.R. had failed to do this, it seemed unlikely anything would materialise unless local inhabitants did something about it themselves. Thus when tentative proposals were put forward to float the Mansfield Railway Company, they succeeded in gaining a fair amount of public support. However, the project did not rely to any great extent on the amount of public enthusiasm, being like the old Pinxton to Leicester line - mainly a coal owners railway.

The railway which these gentlemen proposed to construct was short, being only ten and a half miles long, and was to connect with the G.C.R. at either end, at their main line near Kirkby in the south and with the old L.D. & E.C.R. near Clipstone in the north; it would be fairly easy to construct and therefore of moderate cost.

Accordingly an Act was sought and obtained, dated 26th July 1910 "incorporating the Mansfield Railway Company, and authorising them to construct railways in the county of Nottingham and for other purposes". The G.C.R. being only too willing to gain access to new coalfields, especially when traffic was being brought to them, supported the new venture and agreed to work its traffic. The railway was divided into three parts:

1. From the G.C.R. near Lindley's Lane, Kirkby  
to Mansfield 5 miles.
2. From Mansfield to Mansfield Colliery. 1 mile.
3. From Mansfield Colliery to the G.C.R. Near  
Clipstone. 4½ miles.

The capital of £250,000 was to be raised in shares of £10 each. The first directors, seven in number, included Emerson Bainbridge, William Jackson Chadburn, and John Plowright Houfton, all well known local gentlemen.

This Act was followed in 1914 by another, authorising certain differences in the line's approach to the G.C.R. at Kirkby, and provided for colliery branches, and a western curve at Clipstone Junction. Even before this had been passed, two sections of the railway had already been opened for mineral traffic; from Mansfield Colliery to Clipstone on 13th June 1913, and from Mansfield Colliery to Mansfield on 2nd June of the following year. The remaining part of the railway was not finished until 4th September 1916. The contractors were Messrs. Baldry, Yerburch and Hutchinson, and the chief engineer, Mr. A. V. Hunt.

The new line was not, however, intended to be purely mineral; provision was made for passengers and the fares authorised in the 1910 Act were 1st class 3d. mile, 2nd class 2d. mile, 3rd class 1d. mile, and the minimum distance to be charged was three miles. Stations were built at Sutton, Kirkby and Mansfield. At the time of opening for passenger traffic, the timetable provided for three trains each weekday with

Connexions to and from London. The first train left Nottingham (Victoria) in a snowstorm at 7.30 a.m. on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1917. It arrived in Mansfield at 8.15 and continued to Edwinstowe and Ollerton. Later in the day a special train left Nottingham conveying Messrs. J.P. Houfton, T. Cravan, W.J. Chadburn and T.W. Pilling; and upon its arrival at Ollerton, a dinner was held at the Hop Pole hotel to celebrate the opening of the new line.

During the inevitable toasts which followed the dinner, Mr. Houfton occupied the chair. Mr. Johnson, speaking on behalf of the G.C. chairman, toasted success to the railway, and during his speech revealed the fact that until the line settled, speed would be restricted to 25 m.p.h. He explained what a help the G.C. was to the company and only wished the lines had been four track instead of two. Mr. Houfton in his reply, jestingly pointed out that far from the Mansfield Company owing the G.C. anything, it was they who owned the Mansfield Railway for developing new coalfields and bringing them traffic but, characteristic of the G.C., they took all and gave no thanks. (If Mr. Houfton had been acquainted with that company's history since its inception, he would have realised quite how true were his remarks). He continued by saying how disappointed they were in not being able to complete the line in three years from when they had started in September 1911, and blamed the war for the cause of the delay and its consequent scarcity of labour. He pointed out how it shortened the route between South Wales and Immingham and how it should help in the development of Mansfield's industries. He ended by pointing out that it was due to the efforts of the Bolsover Colliery Company and the Duke of Portland that the railway had been built, and repeated his belief which had inspired the construction of the line - that competition between two companies was a good thing.

The local paper, while agreeing as to its being a great boon to the town, went on to illustrate the latent possibilities in the coalfields lying to the east of the railway, stating that when Rufford and Clipstone pits were working, an annual output of 3,200,000 tons was expected, and new pits at Blidworth, Farnsfield and Bilsthorpe had already guaranteed the company a certain amount of traffic.

All these pits, lying to the east of the Mansfield - Worksop line were sunk at a fairly recent date, as compared with those in the west, lying around the borders of Derbyshire. Indeed, the east midlands coalfield is still being developed in an area east of Hucknall as we shall see later.

Some of the lines connecting the collieries in this area present many interesting features, and among them are the series of lines constructed from the Mansfield - Southwell branch of the L.M.S. and the Mansfield - Clipstone - Ollerton stretch of the L.N.E.R. consisting of three lines, all of which run in a north - south direction.

Leaving Mansfield L.M.S. the first colliery branch leaves the line about two miles from the town and connects with Mansfield colliery. The line, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles long, runs through a cutting for half its length and then on an embankment to the pit, which lies at the side of the Mansfield Railway, from which there is a loop, and sidings, The next junction occurs in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles and this line, opened on 20th June 1912, runs N.N.E. to Rufford colliery. Nearly seventeen years later it was continued northwards, and after crossing under the Mansfield - Clipstone line, turned sharply to the east, and then back again in a U bend to Clipstone colliery, a distance of two miles, From this pit there is a connexion with the L.N.E.R. which was authorised in the 1914 Mansfield Railway Act, together with a line near the same junction southwards to Rufford colliery, which was opened four years later. In 1928 a three mile line was built from this branch, which runs, mainly on embankments, to Bilsthorpe colliery, which had then just been opened. As late as 1934 another line was constructed from the Rufford branch southwards, again on embankments, over the Southwell line to Blidworth colliery, which had been served by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile branch from the L.M.S. since 1925.

During the middle 1920's, both railway companies realised the need for improving transport facilities in the area, for not only was the coalfield being extended, but the coal output from some of the pits was increasing. The L.M.S. Company, between 1927-29, put in hand schemes costing about £400,000 to improve the situation, including the following:

- New marshalling yard at Shirebrook.
- Welbeck colliery branch.
- Clipstone colliery branch (from Rufford)
- New loop at Kirklington.
- Doubling track Southwell to Rolleston.
- New West curve at Rolleston, enabling traffic from Southwell line to work direct to Beeston sidings.
- Extensions to Beeston sidings and provision of loco turntable, etc.

Now in addition to the newly opened Bilsthorpe colliery, new pits were contemplated at Calverton, south of Blidworth, and Bothamsall, north of Ollerton; and it became evident to the railway companies that lines must be built to serve them.

The outcome, the result of co-operation, was a railway line some 24 miles long to be constructed and controlled Jointly by the L.M.S. and L.N.E.R. Authorised in 1926, it was to extend from Junctions with the L.M.S. and L.N.E. at Hucknall, through Farnsfield and Ollerton to Checker House on the L.N.E.R. between Worksop and Retford. Work was not started in earnest until the Autumn of 1929, when the building of the 7 mile middle section between Ollerton and Farnsfield was undertaken by Shanks and McEwan, the Scottish firm of contractors. This was completed and opened about 1930, and the only loop is at Bilsthorpe. The signal box here is manned by L.M.S. staff, and before it was opened in 1931, the points were operated from ground frames. Although the line is single, enough ground was acquired for double track, and the work involved the excavation of some 922,000 cubic yards of cutting, the construction of twenty four bridges, and a viaduct. This section was the only part of the project to be completed, and it is doubtful whether the northern and southern extensions will ever be built, for neither of the proposed pits were sunk. The relation between the proposed collieries and the section of line which was built can be seen from the map, which also shows the complete project, and adjoining main railways and it will be realised why the traffic on the line is not heavy. The L.M.S. are able to tap Bilsthorpe and Ollerton collieries, but the L.N.E.R. has little use for the line, and very few trains are run by that company.

Westwards from here, along the L.D. & E.C.R. we come to a short line to Thoresby colliery, near Edwinstowe. Past old Clipstone village, the railway has a connexion, opened in 1915, with Welbeck colliery, from which one million tons of coal a year was expected at the time of the Mansfield Railway opening.

In the south of this area, we come to the part of the coalfield that is still under development. This is near the picturesque country village of Calverton, and in June 1937, the first shaft, (for man-riding purposes only) of a new pit was sunk. Had it not been for the war, the colliery would have been in full production by 1946, and producing a million tons a year. However, it was not until the 11th January of that year that the first turf was cut for the main shaft, which is being sunk by Blandford & Gee,

of Doncaster and will be about 1,700' deep. It is of interest to note that this pit, although it will probably not be in full working order until the end of 1948, was the last in this country to be planned and developed under the private enterprise system, B.A. Collieries Ltd., being the company concerned. A railway is, of course, to be built to serve it, but it will not be the southern part of the Mid-Notts. Joint line, as the site of the present colliery does not coincide with the position of the proposed Calverton colliery of the 1920's. An act was passed in 1947 for a railway about seven miles long to leave the L.M.S. Mansfield - Nottingham line near Bulwell Common and terminate near Calverton Lodge. An amendment necessitates the diversion of the main Mansfield - Nottingham road near Papplewick and a few other minor alterations. Many years ago, a similar project for a colliery here, was mooted, and some land actually acquired for the construction of a railway line from Hucknall to Burnstump Hill, two miles north west of Calverton. Plans were prepared for a shaft to be sunk here, but the 1914 war steadied the scheme, which was later dropped, and the acquired land sold.

This colliery may not be the last to be sunk in this district, for between here and the Trent, lies an area of 54,000 acres with a minimum coal reserve of 800 million tons, though it will now be up to the National Coal Board, and not private enterprise, to tap this valuable mineral wealth.

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Most colliery branches are of insufficient length, or do not carry such an intense traffic to warrant more than a single track of railway, and some notes on the systems used to regulate traffic on these branches will not be out of place.

It will be realised that on all single line sections of railways where trains run in both directions over the same track, elaborate regulations and precautions are necessary to prevent the possibility of a head-on collision between two trains. There are four standard methods of working single line branches as follows

1. Electric token block system. The object of this system is to prevent more than one train being on a single line of railway between two token stations or signal boxes at the same time, and when no train is in this section, to admit of a train entering from either end. This is accomplished by every train carrying a token which has marked on it the name of the token station at each end of the section to which it applies. One token only is obtainable from the token instruments of the same section at the same time; and passing loops are provided at the end of each section. An example of a line which uses this system is from Rufford Junction to Rufford Colliery.
2. Train Staff and Ticket. The idea is similar to that above; one staff only being available for a section between passing loops, and this must be carried by any engine before it is allowed to enter the section. By leaving it at the signal box at the other end of the section, it will be available for an engine to run in the reverse direction, and so on. To permit flexibility of this system in order to provide for an uneven flow of traffic and yet retain the precaution for safety, the rules have been modified and supplementary staffs in the form of printed tickets are issued from the signal box which has possession of the staff at the time. Thus each train is given a ticket, valid for one direction only, until such time as a train shall want to enter from the other end, when the staff itself will be sent. A driver must not leave a staff station without the staff or ticket for the section of the line over which he is about to run, and, if he leaves with a ticket, must see the staff itself. The line between Pinxton signal box and the Colliery Junction box is worked by this method.



3. Of the "one engine in steam principle" many examples can be found in the local colliery branch lines. A staff is provided on which is marked the branch to which it applies. The idea is to allow an engine carrying this staff to work continuously on the branch, and when the staff is not in the signal box at the end of the single line, no points or signals may be set to allow another engine on the section. Thoresby colliery line is an example of this type. As a matter of interest it may be mentioned that certain persons are appointed to "receive staff from and deliver it to the driver" - in the case of Warsop Main pit it is the job of the Staveley Coal & Iron Company's shunter.
4. The fourth and last method is single lines worked by Pilot Guard. A train must not be allowed to run on the line unless it is either accompanied or personally started by the pilot guard. Provision is made, as with the train staff and ticket system, for an uneven flow of traffic, and when a train is started but not accompanied by the pilotman he issues a "pilot guard's ticket" which is available for one direction only. An example of this type of working is to be found between Blackwell East Junction and "B" Winning colliery sidings.

So much for the different types of single line control, but there are many other regulations peculiar to colliery branches,. The railway companies usually lay down rules for working at collieries and also give various precautionary measures which should be followed. On the L.M.S. branch to Mansfield colliery wagons must be in front of the engine when a train is proceeding towards the pit. In many colliery yards trolley lines i.e. small pit railways, cross the sidings and have to be removed before a train can proceed, as for example, at Rufford pit. The L.M.S. branch to this colliery runs through an extensive forest belt and enginemen are warned of a fire risk, especially in a dry period.

CHAPTER VIII.

Decline of passenger services.  
Conclusion.

Our story of railway development up to the year of grouping has been traced in the preceding chapters. It has been the story of a struggle which, from its beginning in the early years of the 19th century, and right down to , the present time, was always evident, and often bitter. The year 1923, however, brought an end to the inter-company competition for predominance in the coalfield, and the quarter of a century which followed gave rise to long single line branches from the established railway routes to the various collieries as these were opened - an instance being the construction of the Mid-Nottinghamshire Joint Railway, promoted by the L.M.S. and L.N.E. Companies.

But the scope of this chapter is not limited to an account of new colliery lines; rather does it deal with railway operation, and give a commentary on the nature of the passenger and mineral traffic - Its rise and decline. In this respect comparison with the past is the only really satisfactory method, and it is proposed to give an historical account of the passenger services as they developed and declined, and a brief picture of railway conditions as they existed through the century.

We have already mentioned, at the beginning of the book, the passenger service as worked over the old Mansfield and Pinxton tramroad, and one point to note is that the M. & P. catered for passengers "on market days only". This priority for freight traffic in a colliery district is not always appreciated by the general public, who forget the lines were laid for coal and not for passengers.

During the early days of the Mansfield - Nottingham branch, many interesting mentions of it were made from time to time in the local newspapers. It would appear that the manner in which the line had been constructed, and its operation, were the cause of some considerable apprehension. Several instances of trains breaking in two were reported and even an over running of the buffers. The line does not appear to have been constructed on really good engineering standards - the report in the "Nottingham Journal", quoted in chapter 3, seems to have been the culmination of a wave of dissatisfaction. The provision of a "Parliamentary" train at 7 in the morning was apparently a popular feature, giving a cheap means of transit from the outlying villages to Mansfield.

However, the state of the whole of the Midland system, especially the branch lines, had, for some time previous to this, been the cause of much adverse comment as will be judged from the following letter to "The Times" of March 23rd, 1847, from "An Oxford Man", of Louth, Lincolnshire;

"Sir, - Never venture into the territory of Hudsonia. Far sooner commit yourself to the tender mercies of a cross-road two-horsed coach than to the decrepit locomotives and worn-out carriages of a new branch line in a distant part of his majesty's dominions. His kingdom, as you well know, commences at Rugby.... From Rugby to Nottingham - a part of the Midland, which has been open for some years, and realizes large profits to the monarch (18) and his vassals - we went very well, and were surprisingly punctual; but from Nottingham to Lincoln the case was far different. We were jolted just as if we were crossing broad and deep ruts, and at seven miles from Lincoln we came to a dead stop. Here, Sir, was a scene worthy the pencil of Cruikshank. The engine was so worn out and unfit for work that the fire in the furnace had actually burnt its way through the iron, and there were the hot cinders falling out as fast as they could, the water getting cold, and no longer any appearance of steam. Happily there was a drain near at hand, and pickaxe and shovel were speedily put into requisition, and a large tile extracted, which, broken in half, served to stop up the aperture. The posts and rails which fenced off the railroad were taken and broken up for fuel, and we at length crawled on to Lincoln at about the speed of an omnibus going up Ludgate-hill at 1 o'clock in the day..."

A few months after this letter was written, the small branch from Rolleston Junction to Southwell was opened and a passenger service was started, to connect with most of the trains on the Nottingham - Lincoln line. This did not pay for itself and horse traction was substituted on a reduced service. Even this was too costly and the trains were withdrawn altogether except for a Wednesday only horse drawn train to Newark market which was tried out in 1853. In September 1860 the steam railway service was restored and two months later the first permanent station was erected at Rolleston Junction.

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(18) Refers to Mr. Hudson, the Railway King.

The year 1877 brings us to the time when Mansfield was becoming established as a railway centre, and a report in the "Mansfield Advertiser" for December 14th of that year states that the Midland Railway were seeking Parliamentary powers to buy land for a new locomotive shed for twelve engines near the station, and for enlarging the goods sidings. "The present loco shed", it adds, "is for two engines, although there are ten stationed here". It concludes by stating that the four large and powerful locomotives, fitted with Westinghouse brake, recently placed on the Mansfield - Nottingham line have effected no improvement in the operation of the local train services.

The Midland, on the newly opened Mansfield - Worksop line provided three trains as far as Whitwell and three others via Worksop to Retford. The M.S. & L. worked the trains from Mansfield to Sheffield, and on these trains tickets were only issued to stations past Shireoaks Junction, thus the traffic to the villages en route remained the monopoly of the Midland Company. At Retford station a separate booking office on the island platform was used by the Midland. This can still be seen, and was used by the R. T. O. in the 1939 war. The description of Mansfield Woodhouse station recorded in an earlier chapter and the provision of good 3rd class travel remind us that travel for the common man had entered on its threshold.

Another passage of 20 years brings us to the 1890's when the last stage of development in the smaller branches had been completed. At this time not only was the coal trade at its height, but new mining villages were springing up. The new townships were not so self-supporting as the rural villages in the east, and the greater extent to which they relied on Mansfield can be gathered by comparing the train services to such places as Pleasley and Teversal with the "3 trains-a-day" service on the Southwell line.

The Pleasley and Westhouses line must have been well used about 1890 for not only was this the best route to Chesterfield, but also a recognised and convenient way to journey from Mansfield to London. All trains made connections at Alferton with main line services; the 7.15 a.m. from Mansfield via this route brought the traveller into London (St. Pancras) at 11.10.

This increased traffic now brought Mansfield prominently to the fore as the centre of the Mid-Nottinghamshire coalfield, and on the 23rd October 1896 the "Mansfield Chronicle" demanded better facilities at the station and the need for a subway. It was followed three months later by a complaint regarding the time of the night mail train from Nottingham followed again on the February by a

strong letter deploring a breakdown - apparently this was still quite a regular feature of the Mansfield - Nottingham trains. Poor time-keeping seems also to have been another feature, and the whole inefficiency of the service seems to have caused much comment in the local press of 1896-7. Even the services on the local branches were unsatisfactory, especially to the inhabitants of Pleasley who complained not only of an insufficient train service but also of the amenities of their station.

After the opening of the L.D. & E.C.R. in 1896, and by means of a south to east curve at Shirebrook, the Midland Railway operated a local service between Mansfield and Edwinstowe and a year later started a service from Sheffield to the L.D. & E.C.R. via the Sheffield District Railway and Beighton. When a south-west curve at Shirebrook was opened in October, 1904, these trains ran direct from Sheffield into Mansfield station, instead of having to make connexions at Warsop, and the service was worked by engines of both companies. This curve, and the use- of the L.D. & E.C.R. line between Langwith and Beighton, provided the Midland with an alternative route to their line through Chesterfield, and for one summer it was used by the Nottingham - Heysham service.

Shortly after the completion of the London extension of the Great Central, competition for the Sheffield and Nottingham to London traffic grew; the Great Northern's afternoon service from Sheffield ran non-stop from Nottingham (London Road) to Kings Cross, and in 1905 the same company operated a non-stop train from Sheffield, via Retford, to London in 2 hours 50 minutes. It was obvious that this competition was very uneconomical and the G.C. & G.N. decided to co-operate, and in the autumn of 1907 the Sheffield and Nottingham to Kings Cross expresses were reduced. The Midland of course was affected by all this, especially when the L.D. & E.C.R. , which it had used quite freely, was purchased in 1907 by the Great Central.

It was during the period 1900-14 that passenger services reached their zenith. In addition, many "paddy" trains were operated daily. This was the name given to miners' trains which in some cases worked over colliery branch lines into the colliery yard or made stops at small halts erected where a "main" line passed directly by a colliery. Some examples of these services are given:

Mansfield - Welbeck Colly, (via Clipstone West & Welbeck Colly Jnc).

Clowne - Creswell Colliery. (via Creswell Colly. Jnc).

Shirebrook South - Teversal & Silverhill Colls.

During the war years, the collieries in the area still developed, with a consequent Increase in traffic. In addition, the setting up at Clipstone of a large army camp with a special temporary station necessitated a considerable number of extra trains and gave added importance to the Mansfield Railway. After the war, the railways were left in a very weak position as far as condition of equipment was concerned, and before long the economic condition of the country caused a clamour for a reduction in railway rates which were, in turn, dependent on the price of coal, The "Mansfield Advertiser" of December 9th, 1921 had something to say on this subject;

"The view is crystallising in the country that all the root of many troubles lies in the cost of coal, which is the primary raw material of practically all industries. We are reaping the harvest of the long continued campaign of forcing up wages and lowering production regardless of economic conditions. We have already stated in these columns that wages in the mining districts are lower, and coal owners are making corresponding sacrifices in profits in order to encourage the export trade, but the wheels of industry need lubricating with a concession in railway rates. Substantial reductions have been made in the pit-head prices of coal in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire - very likely similar steps have been taken at other mining centres - and this reduction should have a natural sequel in a cheapening of railway running. If the price of materials were reduced at the source, a general fall in costs and living would be inevitable. Thus we might revolve in a charmed instead of vicious circle"

On 1st January 1923 the railway grouping took place: the Midland Railway became part of the London, Midland & Scottish Railway; and the G.N.R., G.C.R., and Mansfield Railway became part of the London & North Eastern Railway.

The Mansfield Railway proved to be of more use than just providing an outlet for the collieries it served. It is part of a much used connexion between Tuxford on the G.N., and Kirkby on the G.C. main lines. In the summer many "specials" take this route from Leicester, Nottingham, Mansfield and district, to Skegness, Cleethorpes, Bridlington and Scarborough, whilst a steady traffic in steel from Scunthorpe and fish from Grimsby, passes southwards throughout the year.

The Southwell branch of the L.M.S. carried a three trains a day passenger service and these were used mainly by farmers to reach the markets at Mansfield and Newark. A few years before Sir Josiah Stamp's economisation policy led to the withdrawing of this passenger service in 1929, the trains had gained a reputation for their lack of speed. It has often been said that the farmers coming to Mansfield could get off at Rainworth station, walk the mile to the nearest public house, have time for two pints, walk back and catch the same train on to Mansfield. Apparently when the line was opened, owing to the influence of John Barrow, a through service was run from Buxton to Southwell, as the former town was then in the Southwell diocese. Perhaps not surprisingly, these trains did not pay, and were soon discontinued. In 1896, the Southwell race course was moved to its present site near Rolleston Junction station and since then special race trains have been a regular feature of the services and are the only passenger trains to run over the line today. From 1928, the L.M.S.R. Company, and later Mansfield District Traction, operated a regular bus service to Southwell to replace the trains; the buses starting from outside Mansfield (L.M.S.) station.

This economisation policy of Sir Josiah Stamp also led to the total withdrawing, or reducing of passenger services on most of the branch lines though this was helped by the spreading popularity of the motor bus. Several small companies had established themselves in the 1920's and these gradually resolved into the bigger concerns such as East Midland, Mansfield District, Midland General and Trent, who have now replaced the railways as the main passenger carriers between Mansfield and the surrounding district.

An example of this closing of branch lines to passenger traffic is the Southwell line, mentioned above; but this policy was not confined to the L.M.S. alone. The L.N.E.R. were compelled to follow suit, although their Introduction of railcars delayed the suspension of passenger services on the Nottingham suburban lines and the Leen Valley branch.

On this line a passenger service is still run over the portion from Annesley to Bulwell for company's servants only. This train known as "The Dido" for many years was worked by the last of a noteworthy class of ex M.S. & L.R. express passenger locomotives, The engine, L.N.E.R. 6464 was one of a batch, of twenty-seven which worked between Manchester and Liverpool, and New Holland and Hull. It was the last survivor of its class and was withdrawn in 1930.

Before they were withdrawn in 1943, Sentinel steam rail-cars worked the Dido. They were replaced by ex Great Central 2-4-2 tanks, and two are stationed at Annesley for this purpose.

By 1940, railcar workings had declined, but prior to the war local services had reached a period of stability. The effect of the war on these services is clearly shown in the accompanying table. The factors which were responsible for the reduction in passenger services were those common to other lines during the war, namely, fuel and locomotive shortage and the increase in freight traffic.

Throughout the country, many special trains were run for the conveyance of war workers; in this area an interesting example was the 'Ranskill' which ran between Mansfield and Ranskill on the G.N. main line north of Retford. This train, composed of L.M.S. carriages drawn by an L.N.E. engine from Langwith, ran from Mansfield L.M.S. station to Shirebrook, where it left the Midland for the L.D.E.C.R. as far as Tuxford, and then over G.N. metals to Ranskill.

Of the post war changes which have taken, and are taking place, much might be written, but we feel that it would be more appropriate to end here our account of the passenger services and with it the whole review of railway development in the area.



Through trains, Mansfield to;	Approximate number of trains in winter service, for year:			
	1937/8	1942/3	1946/7	1947/8
Nottingham L.M.S.	20	10	17	10
Elmton & Cresswell & Worksop	8	5	8	6
Elmton & Cresswell only.	3	1	3 M-F 6 Sat	1 SO
Chesterfield via Elmton & Cresswell	3	0	0	0
Pye Bridge & Ambergate X	4	2	3	0
Pye Bridge only.	6	2	4	1
Sheffield L.M.S. via Langwith L.N.E.	3	0	0	0
Nottingham L.N.E.R.	14	6	7	6
Chesterfield via Warsop XX L.N.E.R.	1	1	1	1

Note : X A change was sometimes necessary at Pye Bridge.

XX This train was principally for the conveyance of parcels

The increased service in 1946 was only in operation at the beginning of the winter period; the fuel crisis and the exceptionally severe weather brought about an early curtailment.

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APPENDIX.

1) Mansfield - Southwell Service.

June 1871

Mansfield dep	9.40	3.45	Southwell dep	8.48	5.18
Rainworth	9.55	3.59	Kirklington	8.54	5.24
Farnsfield	10.03	4.07	Farnsfield	9.00	5.30
Kirklington	10.10	4.13	Rainworth	9.08	5.38
Southwell arr	10.20	4.20	Mansfield arr	9.25	5.55

2) Mansfield - Alfreton with Connexions to London. January 1888

			SX	SO	SX	SO
Mansfield dep	7.15	9.35	1.15	1.55	6.40	7.30
Mansfield						
Woodhouse	7.19	9.39	1.19	1.59	6.44	7.34
Pleasley	7.28	9.48	1.28	2.08	6.53	7.43
Teversal	7.35	9.55	1.35	2.15	7.00	7.50
Woodend	7.40	10.00	1.40	2.20	7.05	7.55
Tibshelf and	7.44	10.04	1.44	2.24	7.09	7.59
Newton						
Westhouses and						
Blackwell.	7.49	10.09	1.49	2.29	7.14	8.04
<u>Alfreton arr</u>	7.52	10.13	1.52	2.33	7.17	8.07
Pye Bridge	8.40	10.18	2.05	2.38	7.46	9.25
Chesterfield	8.20	11.13	3.02	3.02	8.30	8.30
Sheffield	8.54	11.47	4.05	4.05	9.00	9.00
London						
St. Pancras	11.10	2.35	5.50	7.50	2.20	4.15

3 ) Mansfield - Pye Bridge via Sutton.

December 1890.

Mansfield										
dep	6.50	7.10	8.10	9.40	11.45	1.38	3.35	6.10		
Sutton	6.56	7.16	8.16	9.46	11.51	1.44	3.41	6.16		
Pinxton	7.07	7.27	8.27	9.57	12.02	1.54	3.53	6.27		
Pye Bridge										
arr	7.13	7.33	8.33	10.02	12.07	1.59	3.59	6.33		
Pye Bridge										
dep	8.07	10.47	11.26	2.35	2.45	5.20	6.47	7.44	9.33	10.00
Pinxton	8.13	10.53	11.32	2.41	2.51	5.26	6.54	7.50	9.39	10.06
Sutton	8.22	11.02	11.41	2.50	3.00	5.35	7.04	7.59	9.48	10.15
Mansfield										
arr	8.29	11.09	11.48	2.57	3.07	5.42	7.11	8.07	9.55	10.22

4) Mansfield(L.M.S.) - Sheffield (L.M.S.) via Shirebrook.

March 1938

		SO			
Mansfield (L.M.S.)	dep	10.28	12.55	4.10	7.15
Mansfield Woodhouse		10.32	12.59	4.14	7.19
Shirebrook		10.38	1.05	4.20	7.25
Shirebrook (North)	arr	10.41	1.09	4.23	7.28
	dep	10.43	1.10	4.36	7.30
Creswell & Welbeck		10.49	1.15	4.42	7.36
Clowne		10.55	1.21	4.48	7.42
Spink Hill		11.03	1.29	4.56	7.50
Woodhouse Mill		11.10	1.36	5.03	7.57
Treeton		11.14	1.40	5.07	8.01
Catcliffe		11.17	1.46	5.10	8.04
West Tinsley		11.22	1.53	5.15	8.09
Attercliffe Road		..	1.59	..	..
Sheffield (L.M.S.)	arr	11.28	2.03	5.21	8.16

5) Mansfield - Chesterfield via Pleasley. August 1890.

				SX	SO
Mansfield	dep	7.40	1.30	5.00	6.50
Mansfield Woodhouse		7.44	1.34	5.04	6.54
Pleasley		7.52	1.42	5.12	7.02
Rowthorn & Hardwick		7.56	1.46	5.16	7.06
Palterton & Sutton		8.05	1.55	5.25	7.15
Bolsover		8.08	1.58	5.28	7.18
Netherthorpe		8.15	2.05	5.35	7.25
Staveley	arr	8.20	2.10	5.40	7.30
Dep		8.25	2.30	5.51	7.40
Whittington		8.30	2.35	5.56	7.44
Chesterfield		8.35	2.42	6.02	7.50

6) Mansfield - Retford & Sheffield.

June 1875.

		G		G		G	
		<u>1&amp;3</u>	<u>1&amp;2</u>	<u>1&amp;3</u>	<u>1&amp;2</u>	<u>1&amp;3</u>	<u>1&amp;2</u>
Mansfield	dep	7.10	10.30	11.45	4.10	6.10	8.10
Mansfield Woodhouse		7.15	10.35	11.50	4.15	6.15	8.15
Shirebrook		7.23	10.43	11.58	4.23	6.23	8.23
Langwith		7.28	10.48	12.03	4.28	6.28	8.28
Cresswell		7.35	10.53	12.10	4.33	6.35	8.33
Whitwell		7.40	10.58	12.15	4.38	6.40	8.38
Worksop	arr	7.50		12.25		6.50	
	dep	7.55		12.30		7.00	
Retford	arr	8.10		12.45		7.20	
Shireoaks			11.08		4.48		8.48
Kiveton Park			11.16		4.56		8.56
Woodhouse			11.27		5.07		9.07
Darnall			11.35		5.15		9.15
Sheffield			11.45		5.25		9.25
<hr/>							
Gainsborough		9.00		2.54		7.48	
Great Grimsby		10.40		4.38		9.25	
New Holland		10.20		4.17		9.15	
Hull		10.53		4.43		9.45	

Note: G: Train operated by M.S. &amp; L.Ry.



